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## *The Shape of Things*

BY LIFTING THE SIEGE OF LENINGRAD AND clearing the Moscow-Rostov railroad to the banks of the Don, the Red Army has laid the foundation for new strategic movements which threaten to snap the enemy's "elastic" defense at several points. Up to now the military experts have been understandably cautious in assessing the potentialities of the second winter offensive. Last year's campaign, important as was its contribution to the attrition of the Reichswehr, proved that the recapture of thousands of square miles of Russia's vast terrain is not strategically significant so long as the invaders remain firmly intrenched in "hedgehogs" commanding vital communications. This year, however, the Russians have demonstrated their ability to crack the most strongly fortified positions. In order to relieve Leningrad they had to break through a ring of iron and concrete defenses which the Nazis had constructed with their usual thoroughness during the seventeen months' siege. The Red Army commanders found the necessary key in their formidable artillery, which, thanks to better weather, they have been able to deploy on a far greater scale than last winter. The same weapon seems also to have played a leading role in the capture of Rossosh, Millerovo, and Kamensk, the three strongly held railroad centers which barred the northern route to Rostov. These victories, north and south, present Hitler with a problem calculated to strain his "intuition" severely. Not the least disagreeable surprise sprung on him by the Russians is their ability to hit hard on several fronts simultaneously.

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GERMAN COMMUNIQUE FROM THE EASTERN front have been both meager and vague recently. But writers in the press and radio commentators have adopted a tone which suggests that the German people are being prepared for bad news. A call has gone forth from Goebbels's office for total mobilization of man-power. Germans who know that more than a quarter of the labor force of the Reich is now composed of foreigners must wonder how much more juice can be squeezed out of a dry lemon. And if their minds are not completely befuddled, they must wonder, also, whether the Russians have discovered how to resurrect the dead, for official sources, which only a few months ago were claiming the "annihili-

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lation" of the last Soviet reserves, now stress the Red Army's superiority in numbers. Lieutenant General Dietmar, speaking as a military expert over the Frankfort radio, has attempted to explain this discrepancy by alleging that "the Russians are far ahead of us in exhaustion of the strength of their people." This is shown, he said, by the presence in the front lines of very old and very young men. On the other hand, the *Börsen Zeitung*, a leading Berlin newspaper, ascribes Russian successes to the use of "élite troops" hitherto held in reserve. More impressive than such Nazi statements of "fact" is Dietmar's admission that the task of holding and organizing German conquests has deprived the fighting front of valuable forces. The frantic new efforts of the Germans to build defensive lines all round the vast periphery of Fortress Europe are likely to prove a further drain on both military and industrial man-power.

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THERE IS A DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN the Russian successes, the German man-power crisis, and growing unrest in the Balkans. Since the beginning of the year reports have been received of attempted uprisings in Rumania and Bulgaria. The root cause in both cases is Nazi pressure for more soldiers, more workers, more supplies. Rumanian armies have participated in the assaults on Odessa, Sevastopol, and Stalingrad, and in all three battles their losses have been huge. Now Hitler asks for further blood offerings, and discontent is expressed by an Iron Guard plot to overthrow the puppet Antonescu. The Bulgarian government has long proved its willingness to accommodate its Axis bosses except in regard to one point: it has always refused to declare war on Russia or to send troops there. In this policy it has been guided by a well-considered respect for the boiling-point of the Bulgarians, who, however ready to accept German favors at the expense of Yugoslavia and Greece, are unalterably opposed to becoming embroiled with their old friends, the Russians, in a German quarrel. Latest reports suggest that the Nazis have once again acknowledged failure in this matter but are demanding as compensation that Bulgaria supply more workers for German factories and more troops for "police" duties in Greece and Yugoslavia. These duties may become increasingly onerous if reports from Ankara, to the effect that the Russian radio has advised the Croat and Serb partisans to link up with Mihailovich, are verified. Nothing could do more to magnify Hitler's Balkan headache than an end to this unhappy schism in the anti-Axis ranks.

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BOMBS ON BERLIN ARE A REMINDER TO THE Nazis to take seriously the President's prophecies in his recent message to Congress—a speech which they tried desperately to minimize. Mr. Roosevelt on that occasion reminded Hitler and Mussolini that their boasted superi-

ority in air power, which enabled them to strike with impunity at Warsaw and Rotterdam, had gone forever. "Yes," he said, "we believe that the Nazis and Fascists have asked for it, and they are going to get it." Nine raids on the Ruhr during the first half of this month followed by two successive attacks on Berlin have heavily underscored his words. Nor are these the only places where the enemy has felt the weight of ever-increasing Anglo-American air power. In the west there have been constant daylight sweeps over France and two night raids on the submarine pens at Lorient; in North Africa American and British fliers have cooperated in a constant assault on Axis installations and supply lines. These operations have played an important part in forcing Rommel's renewed retreat toward Tripoli. In Tunisia the air forces are keeping alive the offensive, which on land has been stalled by bad weather and communication problems, and we have air superiority to thank for the fact that the enemy has not been able to take greater advantage of the failure of our first dash toward Tunis.

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FOR A TIME DURING LAST SUMMER AND fall it seemed as if real progress was being made in dealing with the submarine menace. It now appears, however, that the decline in sinkings was due largely to seasonal conditions and that the advent of winter and spring mists may bring a serious crisis in transport. As proof that the submarine is, as Admiral Stark recently declared, "our first enemy," it is reported that the United Nations are losing at least two ships a day in the North Atlantic and six a day throughout the world. Although new construction in the United States has reached an unprecedented level of four ships a day, it is evident that United Nations ship construction is barely replacing losses; and the destruction of U-boats by the American and British navies, though large, has not kept pace with U-boat construction. The new U-boats are reported to be superior to those used a year or so ago, and Nazi submarine tactics are constantly improving. Meanwhile the production of American anti-submarine weapons has bogged down. The source of the trouble appears to be the fact that the navy is having great difficulty in obtaining priority rights for equipment to be used in the anti-submarine campaign. Unless the U-boats can be curbed we may find ourselves, as one observer put it, "marvelously equipped to fight a war in the Mississippi."

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WILLIAM M. JEFFERS, THE RUBBER CZAR, IS charged by army and navy critics with holding up anti-submarine weapons by seeking to have critical materials diverted to the synthetic-rubber program. Without question the rubber program is lagging. But the armed services insist that they can cut down their rubber requirements much more easily than they can sacrifice either

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anti-U-boat equipment or the production of aviation gasoline. Since the military needs for rubber for 1943 can presumably be met from the present stockpile, Ceylon's output, and such synthetic production as now seems assured, Jeffers's drive for top priority has taken on a purely political aspect. Hundreds of thousands of motorists, especially salesmen, have been looking to Jeffers to produce rubber for new tires when their present ones wear out. While the rubber chief probably knows perfectly well that there can be no rubber for new civilian tires this year, or probably next, he has not been above issuing the kind of publicity that is calculated to win him motorist, and hence Congressional, support in his struggle with the armed services. The priority issue has been referred to James F. Byrnes, Director of the Office of Economic Stabilization, for settlement, and it is to be hoped that the decision will be reached solely on the basis of military considerations.

★

WENDELL L. WILLKIE, A SELF-APPOINTED trouble shooter in a troubled world, has issued a timely warning against sacrificing "the tradition of the liberal arts" for the sake of war-time efficiency. Whether or not the danger is as great as he paints it, the trend is clearly in favor of extracting the maximum present usefulness from our colleges whatever the ultimate cost in cultural values. Should the war be over in a year, perhaps the net results will not be serious, but in the event of a drawn-out conflict control of the country will one day pass into the hands of a generation unschooled in the "humanities," a generation of cold and narrow technicians. "It would be a tragic paradox," as President Hopkins of Dartmouth comments, "if as a result of the war we were to allow our system of higher education to be transformed into the type of education which has made it so easy for a crowd of governmental gangsters like Hitler's outfit to commandeer a whole population." Mr. Willkie's concrete proposal, however, leaves us in doubt. He asks that a "nucleus" be left in the colleges "of men whose aptitudes qualify them as definitely for our long-range needs as other men are obviously qualified for, let us say, medicine." It is hard to say which would be the more difficult to find, draft-board officials capable of selecting this cultural élite, or students willing enough and brave enough to accept a war-time designation as "preservers of our cultural heritage." All the same, the country should be grateful to Mr. Willkie for focusing attention on a supremely important problem.

★

WHEN CARLTON J. H. HAYES WAS SENT TO Madrid as Ambassador, *The Nation* gave him the benefit of some rather grave doubts. We set off his long record as a democrat and liberal Catholic against his open defense of Franco in the Spanish War, and suggested that

judgment be withheld until Hayes had shown what he could do. But the speech delivered in Madrid on January 15 has demolished our most charitable hopes. In the midst of a vigorous statement of the American position in the war, Mr. Hayes, according to the Associated Press, "hit hard at Axis-inspired rumors that an Allied victory would mean the overturn of the present government in Spain." And then he made the promise, directly quoted on another page of this issue, that any future change that might occur in Spain would come from inside and not be the work "of the United States or of Spanish émigrés." Presumably Mr. Hayes is authorized to speak for the United States. Perhaps in the hour of victory over the Axis we shall leave in power the lesser dictators and Quislings to threaten the future peace of Europe. Perhaps—but if so, this war is being fought for strange and uncertain ends. When Mr. Hayes pledges the United States to defend fascist Spain against the Republicans who were driven out when Franco came to power, he raises even more serious questions. The freedom-loving Spaniards now locked up in prison camps in Africa or in exile in Britain and this hemisphere are not likely to be impressed by Mr. Hayes's promises. The moment the Axis falls, they will join their anti-fascist brothers in Spain in throwing out of power the dictator whom Hitler and Mussolini put there—unless Mr. Hayes plans to use the American army to prevent a democratic revolution in Spain.

## What Next in Africa?

BY FRED A. KIRCHWEY

NORTH AFRICA this week looks like a Jack Horner pie filled with carelessly wrapped bits of high explosives mixed in with a few favors of questionable value. You pull your ribbon and hope for the best.

At least it can be said that a change of some sort is likely. And in the absence of real information it's a safe bet that any change will be an improvement. Whether the President and Mr. Churchill are conferring or are about to confer, whether Generals de Gaulle and Giraud are even now patching up an agreement, a new deal in North Africa seems to be in the making. That the present political set-up can't be allowed to continue is agreed on all sides: first, because public feeling, especially in England, won't tolerate it; second, because the turmoil behind our lines is a constant hindrance to a successful fight against Hitler's forces in Tunisia.

The only way to talk about what is going to happen is to guess. And the only way to guess is to pull the pie to pieces, and unwrap as many of the contents as we're allowed to.

Let's look at the few facts first. Perhaps the most en-



couraging fact is the presence of Harold MacMillan as British Minister at Allied Headquarters. Mr. MacMillan represents the British government's determination to intervene in the mess—politely and in full cooperation with General Eisenhower and Mr. Murphy, but firmly. In this role, every word Mr. MacMillan speaks for publication carries the weight of the government that sent him to Africa. So his words are to be examined with great care. What the Minister said can be summed up in the following propositions: (1) The abuses carried on under the present French provisional government will not be tolerated by "the British and American people": specifically, the anti-Jewish laws will have to be repealed and the political prisoners freed as rapidly as possible. (2) Generals Giraud and De Gaulle will surely get together very soon, and their agreement will make possible necessary changes in the political set-up. (3) In spite of fascist and monarchist maneuvers, 90 per cent of the French in North Africa are for the Republic. (4) Allied activities in North Africa are watched throughout Europe as a demonstration of what the other occupied countries may expect when Allied armies land.

The efforts of Mr. MacMillan are certain to be in support of a change from Darlanism to republicanism; so his arrival must be greeted as an omen of better days.

Fact number two is of related and subsidiary importance. It is Brendan Bracken's statement which appeared on the same day as MacMillan's interview. Brendan Bracken, British Minister of Information, said that the British government solidly backs General Eisenhower and that no differences exist between it and the United States on policy in North Africa. Hailed by the *New York Times* as an answer to American "jitterers" and "snipers," this statement was, of course, a complete acknowledgment of the deep disturbance in British-American relations.

The British government is not sentimental about democratic procedures in the empire or anywhere else. But when a political blunder raises a political storm of the dimensions that blew up in England over the Darlan deal, then the authorities take notice. The British government wants no new Hoare-Laval rumpus on its hands. But even less does it want trouble with the United States. Having opposed our stubborn Vichy policy from the start, having backed De Gaulle and recognized his authority as the head of organized French resistance, Britain could hardly contemplate with approval the American maneuvers that produced Darlan and the mess that ensued. But it loyally kept its mouth shut, did its best to prevent news and criticism from reaching the public, and acted only when public indignation had risen to the boiling-point. It proposed a settlement, the terms of which have only been hinted at, sent MacMillan to Africa, and then issued a statement saying that everything was fine in this best of all possible alliances.

Fact three is a puzzler. Ugly and explosive, but not easily explicable. Fact three is the summoning of M. Peyrouton from his post as Vichy Ambassador in Argentina to North Africa to act, presumably, as head of the civil government there. Peyrouton is the very model of a Vichy collaborationist. His relations with the Nazis were close; his own record is unsavory. In *The Men Behind Darlan*, in *The Nation* for December 26, he is described as Flandin's associate in arranging financial deals with the Germans. As Vichy Minister of the Interior he carried out a savage policy of repression against his fellow-countrymen who opposed Vichy and collaboration. His earlier position as Resident-General of Tunisia undoubtedly recommended him to the present authorities, and it is said that Admiral Leahy, during his stay at Vichy, developed a strong liking and respect for Peyrouton. If Darlanism is to continue to rule in North Africa, the summoning of this friend of reaction and ally of Hitler is easy to explain. If Darlanism is to be supplanted with any administration acceptable to anti-fascists, then Peyrouton's arrival seems ill-timed, to say the least. Was it, perhaps, a last card played by the sinister Nogues? Or is Peyrouton merely a delayed reaction, a relic of a policy about to be ended? One must hope that this last possibility is the correct one. But if the story is true that Eisenhower himself approved the importation of Peyrouton, then neither of the other facts I have set down makes any sort of sense.

I prefer to contemplate the fourth package in the pie—this one a blatant rumor. The rumor is that Eisenhower is fed up with Murphy and all his works. The story has a good foundation in logic, but that doesn't, alas, prove its accuracy. The sequence runs as follows: An ably planned and brilliantly executed American military expedition landed in North Africa expecting to be welcomed with comradely enthusiasm by authorities who had presumably been won to our support by the diplomatic efforts of Mr. Murphy. Instead it was met with gunfire and other evidences of hostility on the part of the French command as well as the civil administration. The efforts of Mr. Murphy and his young assistants had failed to subvert a single key man. Persons who were genuinely pro-Ally, De Gaullists and others, were clapped into jail. Eisenhower made a forced decision which netted him immediate military advantages. With no time to maneuver and little political experience, he soon found himself saddled with a full-fledged French fascist administration thoroughly uninterested in installing any one of the four freedoms in North Africa. The further efforts of Mr. Murphy have neither solved the political problems nor lessened Eisenhower's responsibilities. The power and unreliability of Nogues, who is known to be in constant and direct touch with Vichy, worry the American command—and with good reason. Eisenhower is said to be ready for a new deal all round.

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The next few weeks will clear a confused situation which has been doubly confounded by the thick crust of censorship that lies over the whole scene. The best hope rests in the plan supposedly put forward by the British: to establish a temporary government in North Africa made up of men acceptable to both Giraud and De Gaulle who would take over civilian functions and move as rapidly as possible toward an administration based on the laws of the Third Republic. If such a scheme is actually cooking behind the scenes, our first adventure in occupation politics may still be rescued from total disaster.

## Monopoly Bottleneck

THE testimony given by Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes before the Senate Small Business Committee dramatizes and illuminates the basic issue in war production. It is whether we shall fight this war with a maximum of comfort for monopoly, paying for the privilege in lives and extra years of struggle, or whether we shall make a truly total effort and thereby increase the volume of supplies and the means of offensive action at the disposal of our own men and the forces of our allies. Two personalities in present-day Washington are the symbols and leaders of these two opposing points of view. Representing the first is Ferdinand Eberstadt, corporation lawyer and Wall Street banker, now vice-chairman in charge of materials at the War Production Board and the most powerful single figure among the civilians in the production picture. The other is Secretary Ickes. Eberstadt brings to the problems of steel, aluminum, copper, and tin the complacent point of view of a man who has spent his life in the service of those who maintain monopoly and scarcity in materials; his actual knowledge of the problem of producing materials has been gleaned from the contract and the counting house. Ickes has spent much of his public life fighting monopoly, and he heads that department of the government which is intrusted with the guardianship of our basic resources and which is best equipped to hasten their development for war. Unfortunately, while Eberstadt is in control of materials, Ickes is on the periphery of power, forced to fight a kind of continuous guerrilla warfare for new sources of the metals and minerals which mean planes and tanks and guns.

In the picture drawn by Secretary Ickes for the Senate Small Business Committee one can see the purposes a war-production program controlled by monopoly serves in the strategy of big business. Control of both the military and civilian arms of the production program has given the big concerns most of the war business. In 1939, as Secretary Ickes points out, 170,000 small plants turned out 70 per cent of our productive goods; the 100 big

ones, "the blue-chip corporations," accounted for the remaining 30 per cent. Today this situation has been reversed. The 100 big concerns turn out 70 per cent of the productive business, mostly war work; 20 per cent of productive output has been eliminated by war-time diversions; the survivors of the 170,000 are trying to get along on the balance of 10 per cent. This is immediately important because it represents a pool of idle war-production capacity. Its ultimate importance is that it is speeding up a concentration of control in American industry that will make the maintenance of free government more difficult. Can anything be done about it?

The principal excuse for the idleness of productive facilities in small business as in large—for much of big business is carrying on its war work in special plants rather than with its normal facilities—is the lack of materials. But this lack of materials, as Secretary Ickes showed, is not due to any dearth of resources. It is due to the wasteful way in which monopoly has developed these resources, skimming the rich surface and leaving vast potentialities untouched. It is due to the hostility of monopoly to new methods for making and extracting basic materials. And it is due to the unwillingness of men drawn from the great monopolies into army procurement and the WPB to grant the loans and facilities required to obtain the vast additional amount of materials which could be drawn from the smaller mines and mills. Some of these mineral resources are "low-grade," but as Secretary Ickes explained, they are "low-grade," in the lexicon of a country so rich that it could afford in the past to ignore all but its most profitable sources of metal. Germany, Sweden, and Norway, Ickes said, have developed great industries from ores of a kind complacently dismissed in this country as of no commercial value—and still so dismissed, as may be seen from the record of the indifferent treatment the WPB has accorded the various programs put forward by the Bureau of Mines for expanding production of manganese, aluminum, copper, zinc, chromium, and other metals. Not the least important aspect of these programs is that they would release much shipping still being used to bring these materials from Russia, India, and Africa.

These possibilities for expansion of the production on which victory depends will never be realized so long as metals and materials are in present hands at the WPB. The steps necessary to tap all possible sources would cripple the whole strategy of monopoly. In the field of fabrication more materials would keep alive the small competitors of big business. In the field of extraction a vigorous program to increase output would save from bankruptcy the small competitors of our big mining corporations. The process sponsored by the Bureau of Mines for obtaining aluminum from low-grade clay would destroy the aluminum monopoly.

It is our duty toward our men and our allies on the

fighting fronts of the world to let nothing stand in the way of maximum output of weapons. *The Nation* hopes that Senator Murray and his colleagues of the Small Business Committee will fight at this session for a Metals and Minerals Administration to be set up in the Interior Department under an Ickes rather than an Eberstadt.

## Supplies for China

TWO weeks have elapsed since the President assured Congress and the American people that "we are flying as much lend-lease material into China as ever transversed the Burma road, flying it over mountains 17,000 feet high, flying blind through sleet and snow." This was a fine, dramatic statement, one of the high points of the President's speech. But on the face of it, the statement just could not be true, and many of the President's hearers must have known that it could not be true. We have refrained from commenting on the statement until now in the hope that some correction or explanation would come from the White House or other source. So far none has. The Chinese have hidden their embarrassment with their usual suavity. T. V. Soong, Minister of Foreign Affairs, begged off when asked to comment. Chinese officials here have remained silent.

The exact amount of supplies being sent into China by air remains a military secret. But it is a small fraction of the 20,000 or more tons that were carried over the Burma road monthly when the traffic on the road was at its heaviest. This is not surprising. During the period of peak operations well over a thousand trucks were in use, each carrying four or five tons of supplies. In addition, a certain amount of material was flown in by air. Recent reports indicate that there are still only a few dozen transport planes on the India-China route. These planes have very limited cargo space; because of the distance about half of the available carrying capacity must be used for gasoline; and breakdowns and essential repairs must be allowed for. Even if a large proportion of the transport planes now in service in the United States should be diverted to this service, the Burma road capacity, limited though it was, could hardly be equaled.

It is not the President's business to check the figures that are handed to him, but someone whose business it is should have gone over them to make sure of their accuracy. It has been suggested that the reference in the statement to *lend-lease* material for China was deliberate—a good part of the supplies that went over the Burma road were not, strictly speaking, lend-lease material, but had been purchased by the Chinese government with loans advanced by the United States. We cannot believe, however, that the Administration would resort to any such quibble. We prefer to think that it was a simple, though astounding, error. Its unfortunate effects can best be wiped out by a simple correction.

## The Hard-Coal Strike

THE action of the anthracite miners in refusing to dig coal rather than accept an increase of 50 cents a month in union dues cannot be condoned either by the public or the government; but the public should recognize that the strike is not an attempt on the part of "unpatriotic" miners to hinder the war effort but a revolt against John L. Lewis and his dictatorial leadership of the United Mine Workers. Moreover, the miners would hardly have resorted to so unpopular a move if they had felt they had any recourse within the union.

The U. M. W. treasury already contains some \$6,000,000. What the anthracite miner wants to know is why the union executive felt it necessary to take another \$3,000,000 a year from the membership. The answer is not obscure. Lewis wants more money to build and control a labor movement with which to fight Roosevelt and secure a dominating role in American life, especially after the war. And that concerns us all.

To be sure, the increase in dues was voted at a convention of the United Mine Workers which included delegates from the anthracite locals; they voted against it but were completely outnumbered by delegates from the bituminous fields. The check-off is written into the union's contracts, though the striking miners say that while they have agreed individually in writing to the deduction of \$1 a month for union dues they have never given similar permission to have the extra 50 cents withheld.

Lewis seems to hold all the cards. He has outlawed the strike, though he is promising the miners a rise in wages in April despite the Little Steel formula. Meanwhile he is accusing the War Labor Board of trying to interfere in internal union affairs. It is significant, however, that he did not go in person to the region of discontent—which has been a center of anti-Lewis feeling—and make at least an attempt to conciliate the miners and prevent the strike. Moreover, he insists that the demand for an immediate increase of \$2 a day in wages is the central issue. As for the question of dues, which obviously provoked the revolt, Lewis meets it with the bland statement that it is not an issue because the increase was approved at a union convention.

The impression is inescapable that Lewis is not really upset over a situation in which a recalcitrant rank and file—"the younger generation" as one union official put it—is exposing itself to public wrath by an ill-advised "wildcat" strike and which provides him with an opportunity to sneer at the War Labor Board and the Administration. If the President takes over the mines, Lewis will have even more to say about government dictatorship. But apparently he has no intention of entertaining so much as a discussion of the 50-cent increase in dues and thereby opening the way for a settlement.

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# Capital Notes

BY I. F. STONE

Washington, January 17

**F.** *D. R. at Mason and Dixon's Line:* If the President's message to Congress is reread carefully, it will be seen that its most important statements point to the need for a renewed attack on the "peculiar institutions" which oppress common men, white and black, below the Mason and Dixon line. In his message Mr. Roosevelt said he had been advised that this was a poor time to speak of building a new world. From what source did this advice come? From Rayburn of Texas. For whom did Rayburn speak? For the oligarchy of Southern planters and Northern capitalists which rules the South. What keeps that oligarchy in power? Poll taxes, racial discrimination, the share-cropper system.

Mr. Roosevelt has been executing a series of strategic retreats. The message to Congress showed that he is confident that he can turn and fight successfully on the line of social security, full employment, freedom from want. The choice itself was pretty obvious; whatever the pendular swings of politics, people are unlikely to vote away their old-age pensions. More significant than the decision made by the President is the fact that he had to defy his own party leadership to make it. "I am told," Mr. Roosevelt said, "that it is a grave error on my part. I dissent." The dissent was a challenge to those Democratic Congressional leaders whose power rests on poll taxes, racial discrimination, the share-cropper system.

"Hitlerism, like any other form of crime or disease," Mr. Roosevelt said, "can grow from the evil seeds of economic as well as military feudalism." He took his stand with those who are not content merely to get rid of Hitler. Where in America can one find economic feudalism? In the South of poll taxes, racial discrimination, the share-cropper system. Mr. Roosevelt gave expression to his own basic faith, the secret of his hold on the masses, despite many compromises on his part and disappointments on theirs. "The issue of this war," he said, "is . . . between those who believe in mankind and those who do not. . . . There have always been those who did not believe in the people, who attempted to block their forward movement across history, to force them back to servility and suffering and silence." Where in our own country are "servility and suffering and silence" most apparent? In the South of poll taxes, racial discrimination, the share-cropper system.

*Politics and Logic.* Logic says that Mr. Roosevelt, in order to defeat his party opponents, must destroy the conditions on which their power is based. This can be

done by abolishing the poll tax, intensifying the fight against racial discrimination, and enlarging the activities of the Farm Security Administration in order to turn more share-croppers, tenants, and farm laborers into independent farmers. Unfortunately, politics is not so simple as logic. In politics the straight line is rarely the shortest possible distance between two points. The President is hoping at one and the same time to defy the Southern oligarchy and to placate it.

Mr. Roosevelt is going ahead with social security despite the advice of the Southern oligarchs. At the same time he is hoping to irritate them as little as possible on other fronts. The White House has passed the word along to soft-pedal the fight against the poll tax. The Fair Employment Practices Committee and the fight against racial discrimination are being elbowed to one side. Changes in the Department of Agriculture have weakened the forces in favor of a vigorous Farm Security program. The inconsistency is not so bewildering as it looks on paper. Mr. Roosevelt feels strong enough to defeat the Southern oligarchy on social security, but not strong enough to make a successful frontal attack on the sources of that oligarchy's power. "Cotton Ed" Smith can hardly denounce old-age pensions and get away with it, but he can get up and rasp, "How'd you like your sister to marry a Negro?"

*Appeaser?* Thus during coming months the President will be carrying on a brave fight on one front and retreating on others. The answer is not to denounce Mr. Roosevelt as a domestic appeaser but to recognize that this is another of those cases in which progressives must lead the President if he is unwilling or unable to lead them. Mr. Roosevelt is a shrewd judge of political possibilities. No one can doubt where his sympathies lie, but obviously he feels this is a fight he cannot lead, though it is one in which he must ultimately join. The job of labor and the progressives is to build up enough understanding of these issues and enough public feeling on them to give the President the support he needs before he can act against the most powerful bloc in his party.

*Dilemmas.* The President's task is complicated by several dilemmas. One is that many Congressional progressives, particularly from the Middle West, are isolationist, while the Southern bloc is internationalist. Mr. Roosevelt needs these Southern votes if he is to help build any kind of world order after the war is over. This is not so paradoxical as it may seem, for internationalism and progressivism do not always go hand in hand. The



outlook of the Southern ruling class has been as broad as the world markets on which it depended for the sale of cotton and tobacco. It has been for a low tariff, and the low tariff implies a friendlier attitude toward the world outside. At home this point of view has tended to be "liberal" in the mid-Victorian and National Association of Manufacturers sense, that is, opposed to restrictions on the freedom of capital to exploit labor and resources. Secretary Hull's outlook is typical of this class. Though the aid of these Southerners may be necessary from the point of view of practical Congressional politics, an alliance with them looking toward some kind of world order is hazardous. For about all they really want is a world made secure for trade and capitalist exploitation.

*Squeeze Play.* Mr. Roosevelt's task is further complicated by Republican strategy, which is to split the Democratic Party. From all indications, the Republicans will press the poll-tax issue, making it difficult for the President to refuse his support to the fight against the poll tax and even more difficult for him to maintain his hold on Southern Democratic leaders. If the President remains the prisoner of the Southern Bourbons while the Republicans abolish the poll tax, his understandable attempt to "navigate" this difficult situation may end in failure. He may find that he has lost the support of both sides. In Mr. Roosevelt's favor is the fact that the Republicans have neither sufficient sincerity nor sufficient freedom—from the great industrial interests which operate North and South—to press the issue too hard. They will seek to press it just hard enough to put the President on the spot. They may end by pressing it hard enough and helping to stir up public opinion enough to make it politically possible for Mr. Roosevelt to step in and complete the job and take the credit. He always has been nimble.

*Hara-Kiri.* The big danger here is not so much what Congress may do to the New Deal but what the New Deal is doing to itself in fear of this new Congress. All down the line New Deal agencies are quietly beginning to commit hara-kiri as progressive instruments of government. Just as the President substituted a Brown for a Henderson, so New Dealers lower down are bringing in conservatives and getting rid of progressives in their own agencies in order to shelter themselves against Congressional inquiry, denunciation, or budget curtailment. Sometimes no actual changes in personnel are made, but one observes a subtle but unmistakable shift of power within the agencies from progressive subordinates to those that are middle-of-the-road or reactionary. The biggest danger spot is the OPA, where Brown has promised to keep staffs intact but is under pressure to replace New Dealers with political appointees susceptible to political pressure. This is the sure path to a disastrous inflation.

The Democratic National Committee would like to take over the OPA and the lush patronage a purge would

offer. The conservative Washington *Star*, in an inspired story looking toward a purge of the OPA, says "the Democratic Committee is prepared to pass along to Mr. Brown any recommendations which members of Congress may make." This bodes ill for price control. The *Star* makes an admission which throws an interesting light on the attacks made upon the OPA: "It will be extremely difficult," it says, "for the new price administrator to move too fast in firing and hiring. The men now handling the rationing and price jobs are almost the only people in the country who have had any experience at such tasks." Why, then, replace them with the inexperienced? And why not be a little more patient with the difficulties which are inevitably encountered in doing a new job?

*Wickard and Dollar-a-Year Men.* Don't be taken in by Secretary of Agriculture Wickard's bar against dollar-a-year men in his Food Administration. It is a good smoke screen to throw around the resignations of Donald E. Montgomery as consumers' counsel and Herbert W. Parisius as head of the Food Production Division of the Department of Agriculture. For many years the milk trust and the packers and the big processing interests have been dominant at the Department of Agriculture, and the prospects are that they will be a good deal stronger under Wickard as the present trend continues. The issue in agriculture is essentially the same as in industry: shall the war program be used to further the wiping out of small holdings, the conversion of small farmers into farm laborers? In agriculture as in industry maximum output is only obtainable by bringing the small operator fully into the war program, but that means providing him with capital and extra facilities. The Farm Security Administration is the proper mechanism for this job, and the FSA has been weakened by the resignation of Parisius. The FSA may be operated in the future as a means of moving the small farmer off the land. As the Secretary of Agriculture says in his annual report, the FSA can "help some small farmers find other employment and . . . regroup the released resources for better operation." That is the monopoly recipe in the field of food production. I have the deepest respect for the Vice-President's gentle humanity and wisdom, but I ask, What's the good of speeches about the century of the common man if we are to run the war program in a way that will deprive more and more common men of their independence?

*Censorship.* José Caudros, a Bolivian journalist who came to the United States recently at the invitation of the New York *Times*, was stopped at Miami on his way home. Clippings of articles in the Washington *Merry-Go-Round*, *PM*, the New York *Times*, and *The Nation* about the Bolivian affair were taken from him. I have been unable to find out whether this was done by censorship or customs officials.

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# Talk on Guadalcanal

BY IRA WOLFERT

WHEN an American puts on a uniform, he doesn't seem to change his politics. If the ballots had arrived in time, the men and boys doing the fighting on Guadalcanal would have voted just about as they would have back home. Their ideas on war aims were no clearer than the ideas of people here. The most sharply defined, most immediately stimulating war aims on Guadalcanal were those a man could level on through his gunsights.

War as we fight it is not, apparently, a political education. Nevertheless, our men are getting something out of it that could prove valuable in so political a matter as winning the peace. Whether it will actually prove valuable we shan't know for some time. But meanwhile we have an opportunity.

When I was on Guadalcanal in October and November, the fighting was rough, and it went deep into everybody who took part in it. The naval battles, too, were heavier and more costly, usually to the Japs, than any others in the history of the world, including Jutland. Standing up to it all was a cross-section of the able-bodied American male population—in the navy, the marines, and the army. They stood shoulder to shoulder, and over their heads, in battle. They fought with passion, quite often with almost lunatic passion or they would not have won. We are a rich country in all the materials of war, but we were not rich on Guadalcanal in October and November.

Nobody who came out of that fighting could be immediately the same again. In the majority of cases the change was an improvement. I have thought all my life that no good ever comes to a man from war, but I was wrong. I, for example, came out of the battles I saw feeling surer of myself and with a special kind of self-respect. That seemed to be true of practically all the men once the disorganizing impact was over and thoughts began to flow normally again. Each seemed to see his qualities as a member of the human race in a new light. Even the minds least capable of generalizing were startled into an awareness of what a remarkable thing a human being is and what powers he has for bearing up under the unbearable and doing the work he has to do.

When a man has this special kind of self-respect, it is a very real power in him. I can illustrate this by two conversations on the same subject, the first with men who had not yet been in battle, the second with men who were recovering from the exhaustion that hits men when the battle is over.

The subject was strikes among workers in war factories. The first time it came up was on a South Sea island near the one on which Eddie Rickenbacker convalesced from his ordeal on the raft. When Rickenbacker came out of that atmosphere, he delivered some stinging criticism of the workers back here. He would probably have felt the same way about the workers at home even if he had never been down there, but the atmosphere there made him want to blast away. The fellows on the island, none whom had had the shaking experience of battle, were working desperately for \$50 or so a month, and they were sore at the money the civilian workers were getting and especially sore at all strikes because they felt that anything that put off production of the weapons to win the war put off the time when they could get away from their various Devil's Islands and go home.

These fellows asked me aggressively why, in a total war which is supposed to involve the whole population, such strikes were allowed. I told them, and they didn't like my answer. I told them it was just because this was a total war. The military phase was only a part of it, just something to deploy us into position to win its last battle, the battle for a peace that will give the workingman a square shake. The fellows back home, the ones they were sore at, the ones who were unwilling to give up the rights they had won, were joining in both battles at once. They were helping to win the war by their production of war materials and helping to win the peace by trying to make a world into which the soldier would want to fit when he went home and took off his uniform.

These island garrisons of ours were getting their news of strikes and of the reactions of workingmen to the war from the radio and occasional newspapers and magazines, and that *Life* article on Detroit had burned into them. I told them that, as \$50-a-month guys who were going to be out of work when the war was over, they ought to be for anything that would give the workingman a say in the running of a business. But they didn't take to that at all. In fact, they said, the hell with that; they were against anything that was going to keep them in uniform a minute longer than it would take to lick the Japs.

Then, two months later, the same subject came up on Guadalcanal, among the same kind of \$50-a-month guys who were going to be out of work when the war was over. This was a day or so after the greatest of the naval engagements, the one that spread out from November 11 to November 15. We had all had a really rugged time,

and our nerves were not yet altogether unbuttoned. A pipe-smoking colonel, a very nice, decent, and reasonable man who votes the Republican ticket for reasons which I don't think are exactly clear to himself, but who got out into the foxholes with his men and shot off a tommy gun with them and crawled on his belly with them to deliver hand grenades—well, he wondered out loud whether the defense workers would have insisted on a forty-hour week if they had been on Guadalcanal during the last four days and nights. There was an appreciative stir among the men around him, about a hundred of them, all of them his.

The colonel's remarks moved me to quite an oration. I told those fellows what I had seen in the Bethlehem plant in Hoboken shortly after the war broke out—big, gripping posters saying "Remember Pearl Harbor" and pencil writing under them saying "Remember Pearl White." And I told them why that was, that while the plant was using high-pressure advertising to steam the men up it was unable to give them more than three days' work a week. And I told them what I had told the other fellows—that the workers back home had the chance to fight both fights at once, the military fight and the fight for the peace, and the earnest ones were not backing down from either one.

The colonel took the pipe out of his mouth to argue with me. The men didn't argue. They listened. They listened to me much more intently than they did to the colonel. I seemed to be saying something they had known all along was true but had not found the words for, while the colonel seemed to be saying something that was in their past, that they had given lip service to but had never really believed.

"If everyone is well off," said one marine, while the whole crowd listened respectfully, "and sees a chance for himself in his life ahead, then he's not going to fight to grab something, but just to protect what he's got. And the big shots ain't gonna be able to sell a bill of goods. If they try, they'll have to fight their own wars." Somebody said something about a soapbox, but most of the fellows nodded in agreement. Even the colonel said yes, but then he added, "Everybody goes for that, but if there was a U. S. O. on Guadalcanal we'd all go for that too, wouldn't we?" With this emphasis on the unattainable, the sudden lift of the crowd disappeared and gave way to a vague restlessness.

It is a fact that the majority of men on the winning side of a battle come out of it better able not only to think through to what they want but to insist against their own fears on getting what they want. Our men know what they want—the four freedoms. If they were told in a way they could accept how these four freedoms could be obtained, they'd help. They'd become an active force in the war's decisive battle, the battle for the peace. But the time is now. The time for our war aims is right now

when this feeling of self-respect is strong in the men. It is a feeling that seems to dissipate rapidly in the world in which we live. Our men came out of the trenches with it in 1918, but by the time the boats got around to bringing them home they were ready for the American Legion.

There is a ferment of ideas in the world and in the army, too, but little to show for it in the army. An exception is the procedure of Colonel E. F. Carlson of the marines, who runs his battalion of raiders like a man convinced of the value and efficiency of the democratic process. He prepares his raiders for each action by telling them not only their assignments but all the reasons for them, why this has to be done first and that second, why the enemy mortars have to be hit and put out of action at 14:20 o'clock and the enemy machine-guns at 14:25. The men are not only allowed but encouraged to discuss and criticize the whole plan, their own assignments and the assignments of others. Carlson's raiders have been decorated as a battalion. They are considered one of the best battalions in our armed services. But their commander's methods have not spread. Perhaps Lieutenant-Colonel James Roosevelt, who has won considerable distinction as an officer and fighting man with Carlson's raiders and is now to form his own raider battalion, will spread the notion an inch farther.

But in any large view the opportunity to get soldiers to make the democratic process effective as a way of life is being wasted. The men on Guadalcanal have about the same political opinions as when they left home. Some of the fellows have been influenced by the intellectual and emotional attitudes of their officers, most of whom are typical of middle-class America, but in general they are just where they were when they left off reading the newspapers and going to the movies and getting their opinions from them. There was just as much potentially fascist thinking being expressed on Guadalcanal as anywhere in the United States. For a while there seemed to me to be more, but finally I realized my estimate had been influenced by emotion. Each instance of it had the shock for me of a hundred when I heard it on our side of the barricades, where we were fighting for the democratic idea.

When the men are in battle they ask themselves, "What the hell am I doing here?" It's a question a man can't help asking when he is sitting out somewhere 9,000 miles away from home with shells and bullets hunting for him. I didn't meet a man on Guadalcanal who hadn't asked himself that question at least once. It's a question, too, that a man ought to be able to answer, and in a way he can accept heartily. I heard many strange answers and some informed and intelligent ones. But the marines and the navy were the only ones who came up with an answer that met immediate acceptance from everybody. Those fellows hadn't been drafted.

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And what they told themselves was, "I asked for it and I'm getting it."

This is not the men's fault, nor is it the fault of the war. The war is a good one. If it succeeds in establishing the democratic process as the world's way of life, it will not have to be fought over again. It is our fault that the men don't know what the shooting is all about, the fault of everybody—teachers, journalists, politicians—who tries to put the emotions that shape men's lives into forms they can understand and accept.

For the right emotions are there. Those fellows of ours are fighting. They are not running out or giving up. Our green troops fight better than Spain's green troops fought against Franco. I saw our green troops—army men who had never been under fire before—step off their ships on to Guadalcanal and find themselves the target for the most terrible bombardment Americans have yet faced in this war. Somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 shells weighing up to one ton apiece were exploding among them. Veterans of the fighting in France in the last war told me the bombardment ex-

ceeded in intensity anything the Germans had poured on them. But our green troops did not run. They began to fight at once as doggedly as the Spaniards did when they finally settled down at Madrid. I think it happened that way because they are solider, better-integrated men and have been made so by the democratic process—what there has been of it in their lives. Every green man there—unable, as green troops are, to suspend the imagination, stop looking for the shell with his number on it and wait to see if it will find him—had to fall back on something inside himself to keep him at his job. He found it, waiting inside him to be used.

If somebody will show him now, while the emotion is still there near the surface, how to use it to help win the peace, then he'll help win it. But as it is, nobody shows him anything in a way that he can accept, and he goes on thinking only that he is fighting for his life against exploding steel. He hates fascism in much the way he hates to get up in the morning and loves democracy as if it were something he had been told at home he ought to love.

## *White Book on Blackmail*

BY ROBERT BENDINER

IN MAKING public its own version of how war came, the American State Department has performed a valuable service. Cautious laymen need no longer withhold judgment on the ground that those responsible for our diplomacy know things that we can't know and that pending their revelations they must be given the benefit of the doubt. In a field as crucial as foreign policy is today that blind trust has already been carried dangerously far, considering the issues at stake. With the publication of "Peace and War," eventually to be issued as a "White Book," the official story has been told. It is for the country to decide whether or not the characters in that story have acted wisely and whether they are equal to the job that lies ahead.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of "Peace and War" is that it adds nothing important to what was already known. There is a sprinkling of new items, such as the endeavor of the Japanese a few months before Pearl Harbor to induce President Roosevelt to meet with Prime Minister Konoye aboard a Japanese warship, but by and large the report is a recitation of the facts as we have known them, supplemented by carefully selected bits of diplomatic dispatches and appropriate quotations from speeches and conversations. Disappointment awaits those who expected that when the State Department finally lifted the veil of secrecy we should really know why Spain was sacrificed to fascism, why General de Gaulle

has been the "untouchable" of American diplomacy, or why we felt called upon to give Italy the oil it needed to crush the Ethiopians. The omissions in "Peace and War" are painfully obtrusive. Here is a book carrying the subtitle "United States Foreign Policy, 1931-1941." In the entire document, running to 50,000 words, the Spanish Civil War receives three unilluminating paragraphs. The Free French fare even worse with a single paragraph to the effect that they existed, established a delegation in Washington, and received a certain amount of lend-lease aid. The affair of St. Pierre and Miquelon is completely ignored.

More important than the omissions are what appears to be the double purpose of the report and the contradictions which this duality imposes. The State Department attempts in its apologia to answer two opposing types of criticism: one which is isolationist and holds the Administration guilty of a will toward war; and another which is interventionist and holds the department responsible for inexcusable delay, inertia, and a will toward appeasement. The result of trying to meet attack from both directions is a curious exercise in ambiguity which faithfully reflects the formless policy we have been pursuing. Equally a reflection of the State Department's nature is the fact that a vastly greater effort is made in this document to placate the isolationists than to satisfy the interventionists.

It is not too much to say, in fact, that "Peace and War" is the department's earnest attempt to convince American isolationists that it was their policy which was tried. This seems to me both accurate and worth having in the record. What is more, the evidence as amassed by the department is impressive.

The most ardent isolationist must be convinced after studying the document that, far from dragging the country into war, the Roosevelt Administration held with incredible persistence to the hope that by placating the aggressors, by rejecting every attempt at collective action or economic sanctions, war could be prevented. In response to public pressure for the adoption of a collective-security policy, Secretary Hull, according to the report, declared in the fall of 1936 "that we could not accept that responsibility, which carried with it direct participation in the political relations with the whole world." One year later, in connection with contemplated action by the League of Nations to curb Japanese aggression in China, "the Secretary said that the United States had been approached on several occasions by other governments with suggestions for joint action; that while the United States believed in and wished to practice cooperation it was not prepared to take part in joint action, though it would consider the possibility of taking parallel action." Similarly when Mussolini attacked Ethiopia in 1935, Hull sent word to our representatives in Geneva that "he considered it advisable for the League to understand that definite measures had already been taken by the United States in accordance with our own limitations and policies . . . and that we desired to follow our course independently." Our course did not include invoking the vital oil sanctions against Italy any more than our "parallel action" in the case of Japan involved an embargo until much too late in the day.

In the spring of 1939, after the Nazis had seized Prague as a culminating gesture of contempt for the democracies, Secretary Hull could still say that "the United States hoped for a fair negotiated peace before rather than after the 'senseless arbitrament of war'; that the United States was prepared to make its contribution to world peace" via the conference table with Adolf Hitler.

No, in all fairness to the State Department, it cannot be said with a shred of honesty that this country was pushed into war by way of "entangling alliances."

But what answer does the department make to its interventionist critics? It says merely that it was not deceived, that it knew the ambitions of the Axis states from the very start. As early as 1935 George S. Messersmith, our Minister to Austria, reported "that the Nazis had their eyes on Memel, Alsace-Lorraine, and the eastern frontier; that they nourished just as strongly the hope to get the Ukraine . . . that Austria was a definite objective; and that absorption or hegemony over the whole of Southeastern Europe was a definite policy." Messers-

smith and Dodd warned the department, says the document, "that what the Nazis were after was 'unlimited territorial expansion' and that there was probably in existence a German-Japanese understanding, if not an alliance." Similarly, Breckinridge Long is credited with having warned from Rome that "any estimate of future possibilities must be based on one of two alternatives: first, that sufficient force would be applied to stop Italy's adventure [in Ethiopia] . . . or second, that Italy would be successful in attaining its objectives," in which case "there would be nothing but trouble in the future." And Ambassador Grew is said to have sent a dispatch from Tokyo as early as 1934 advising our policy makers that "things were being constantly said and written in Japan to the effect that Japan's destiny was to subjugate and rule the world. He said that the aim of certain elements in the army and navy, the patriotic societies, and the intense nationalists throughout the country was 'to obtain trade control and eventually predominant political influence in China, the Philippines, the Straits Settlements, Siam and the Dutch East Indies, the Maritime Provinces and Vladivostok.' . . . We would be 'reprehensibly somnolent,' Ambassador Grew warned, if we were to trust to the security of treaty restraints or international comity to safeguard our own interests."

Despite all this advance notice, the department fairly boasts, we refrained from taking action, either economic or political, that might have served to weaken the Axis powers or in any way check their advance. We did not use the "force" suggested by Long, nor did we take any steps to head off the Japanese. In fact it was Long himself who cautioned against oil sanctions against Mussolini, when the crisis came, just as it was Grew who opposed an embargo against Japan.

Adding confusion to paradox, the same document which reports all this advance knowledge—which in fact assures us that the President and Mr. Hull "early became convinced that the aggressive policies of the Axis powers were directed toward an ultimate attack on the United States"—also reports Hull as saying in April, 1939, that "he could not believe that any nation had entered irrevocably upon the road to war."

What "Peace and War" adds up to is that our policy makers expected each aggressive step taken by the Axis but rejected any approach other than verbal censure; that they hoped on each occasion that the succeeding step could be averted by this treatment and were invariably deceived; that they thought it all worth while, nevertheless, for the sake of preventing a world conflict, and that in the end, "despite" all their efforts, the world was plunged into war. As an unwilling witness against the doctrine of isolationism, the State Department has given valuable testimony. May it be taken to heart by those who already dream of again making the ostrich our national emblem after the war.

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# Pigeonhole for Negro Equality

BY JAMES A. WECHSLER

Washington, January 15

THE Administration's effort to combat racial discrimination in war employment has reached a sudden, explosive crisis. The blow-up is the direct result of Manpower Commissioner Paul V. McNutt's order "indefinitely postponing" the Fair Employment Practices Committee's exposure of the anti-Negro coalition on the railroads—the coalition of rail management and "lily-white" unions to drive Negroes from present jobs and bar them from future ones. Public hearings at which the full story was to be told were scheduled to begin on January 25. Preparations had been announced as far back as last October; the move had been widely heralded in the Negro press and by Negro labor leaders, A. Philip Randolph describing it as a "showdown test" of the FEPC's power to put Jim Crow out of business. On January 11 McNutt formally called off the show. He promised that "other ways" would be found to secure "maximum utilization" of labor on the railroads. He didn't say how. One committee member commented privately, "They've been trying the other ways since the Civil War."

McNutt's action has obviously paved the way for the FEPC's collapse—either through the abrupt resignation of its members or the slow deterioration of its prestige among minority groups. But the story behind the ban provokes much bigger questions than the fate of the committee, which might conceivably be replaced by another agency. In the minds of informed officials here the crackdown on the FEPC has stirred inescapable suspicion that the "Negro issue" is to be pigeonholed—as if it could be for any length of time. Belief that McNutt's order is part of a deliberate retreat by the Administration has been publicly voiced by Negro leaders. This view is being communicated to the Negro people. Walter White, head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has openly charged that Marvin McIntyre, a Southerner and White House secretary, is "making the Administration's decisions" on the handling of the fight against discrimination; and that the decision is to stop fighting.

There are unmistakable signs that suppression of the railroad hearings is not an isolated administrative blunder committed by McNutt. I know that McNutt has privately told other officials he was acting at the direction of the White House, and was ready to "take the rap" for his chief. It is obviously unlikely, moreover, that the Manpower Commissioner would have made so contro-

versial a decision without consulting anyone except members of the Indiana Alumni Association.

The consequences of his action will be vast—perhaps more serious than some Administration officials want to believe. McNutt's intervention in the railroad case threatens to overshadow the authentic progress made under the Roosevelt Administration toward giving the Negro—and other minorities—a better break at the employment offices. It will give the Axis radio plenty to say about our democratic pretensions. It directly affects war production, where full employment of Negroes is desperately needed. And it is a cruel slap in the faces of Negro Americans, whose devotion to the democratic cause has been so severely tried already.

The full impact of McNutt's action can be seen only in terms of the FEPC's background and the circumstances under which it has operated. On June 25, 1941, President Roosevelt issued his celebrated Executive Order 8802 declaring it to be official United States policy "to encourage full participation in the national-defense program by all citizens of the United States, regardless of race, color, creed, or national origin." The order directed that all contracts between the government and private firms should embody an anti-discrimination pledge. The Fair Employment Practices Committee was set up to act as an enforcement agency. The committee included representatives of the public—Mark Ethridge, a Southern publisher, was its first chairman—of the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O., of Negroes, and of industry.

To American Negroes Executive Order 8802 was a sort of minor Emancipation Proclamation. It was more than a pious thought; the order established concrete machinery as well as a firm moral foundation for carrying on the struggle against discrimination. To an equal degree, of course, the order aroused the hostility and hysteria of the white-supremacy fanatics in Congress and elsewhere. They have never been willing to concede that when a Negro asks equal employment rights he is not "propositioning" the boss's sister; the FEPC inevitably became the target of attack in all the best lily-white circles. But it went to work with impressive sobriety and a clear awareness of the potentialities of the situation. In retrospect one might say that the FEPC's chief defects were the product of timidity.

After holding public hearings the committee published findings of discrimination in many areas and issued "cease-and-desist" directives. Last April 12, for example, it exposed discriminatory practices in ten key



manufacturing plants in the Chicago and Milwaukee areas. It hit both employers and unions. There is no way to estimate conclusively the effectiveness of these reports and directives. Functioning with a meager staff and limited funds, the committee could not undertake to



Paul V. McNutt

police as well as to probe. If defiance of its orders was extensive, no showdown ever took place. Reports indicate that, whatever its limitations, the FEPC's exposures were sufficient in many important cases to alter long-established hiring policies. Its activities helped to create a climate of opinion in which employers felt a growing guilt about their traditional prejudices—in so far as they affected war

work. This was the essential beginning from which greatly improved practices might develop.

After Pearl Harbor speculation arose immediately as to whether the Administration would continue its frontal attack on discrimination or yield to pleas for "unity"—on Jim Crow terms. The FEPC was continued. Government officials from President Roosevelt down uttered repeated pleas to employers to break down racial barriers on the assembly lines. As the scope of the war effort became apparent, it was equally clear that the need for maintaining the anti-discrimination drive had grown rather than diminished.

Yet the FEPC faced mounting resistance. Representative Rankin and other noted Negro-baiters took the floor of the House to decry its activities. Throughout the first year of its life the committee operated on a budget of \$80,000. Then, last July, the President announced that the FEPC, which had been an independent agency directly responsible to him, was being merged with the War Manpower Commission. This step aroused widespread fear that the agency was slated for slow death; it was pointed out that its funds would be subjected to Congressional approval, that its acts would be submerged in the larger politics of the Manpower Commission. After months of negotiation, however, McNutt granted what appeared to be virtually autonomous status to the FEPC. He also promised to help obtain an increase in its budget. I have no reason to believe that McNutt was not earnest in these commitments. But other things were taking shape.

For one thing, the State Department, it is reliably reported, took exception to hearings which the committee was planning with regard to discrimination against Mexican laborers in Texas. The hearings did not occur. A high navy official suggested to the FEPC that hearings scheduled for the Detroit area would hamper navy "morale-building" plans. (I understand that this protest has been withdrawn since the current row broke out.) The Railroad Brotherhoods joined the railway magnates in behind-the-scenes pressure to stop the FEPC investigation. Governor Dixon of Alabama defied FEPC mandates in that state and virtually seceded from the Democratic Party. Most important, however, were the Congressional elections, the ensuing gloom in Administration circles, and increased White House dependency upon the whims of the Southern Democrats. McNutt is expected to go before Congress soon to ask for more money for the United States Employment Service and fewer restrictions on its personnel. Questions will inevitably be asked about the FEPC.

The developments cited were encouraging to those within the Administration who wanted to suspend all efforts against discrimination and who regarded Mrs. Roosevelt as an incorrigible idealist. At the same time, however, the FEPC was staying in business and appeared on the verge of obtaining an increased appropriation. It had hired Henry Epstein, former Solicitor General of New York, to conduct the long-advertised railroad hearings. Epstein and his staff had collected their evidence. And in a larger sense the FEPC, despite its inadequacies, was becoming a court of appeals and a hope for Negroes who found employment gates slammed in their faces. It needed more men and more money, but its mere existence was a symbol of the President's plans for a new deal for the Negro. The problem still remained enormous: a recent survey in relatively enlightened New York City showed that Negroes, who form 6.1 per cent of the population, formed 26 per cent of the unemployed.

Now even the symbol of progress and hope is slipping away.

Can we afford to "buy off" the Southern Democrats at the expense of the Negroes and other minorities? Can we afford it in the face of the man-power demands of the production program and the crucial challenges of psychological warfare? To put it bluntly, the hopes of Negroes have been raised, and their disillusionment now will be far more disastrous than if the President had never shown a willingness to wage this battle. There are delicate balances which must be achieved in pushing the campaign against discrimination; the FEPC was fully sensitive to them. But now, swiftly, the President must act to silence the doubts and despair which will envelop the Negro population. The FEPC must be kept alive. Its right to function freely must be reasserted. There is not much time to retrieve the ground already lost.

# Carlo Tresca

BY JOHN DOS PASSOS

CARLO TRESKA was born in 1879 in Sulmona in the Abruzzi. Sulmona was an ancient stone town set in a bowl-shaped, well-watered valley in the midst of the highest mountains of the range that forms the Italian peninsula's backbone. It was a town of cobbled streets and old churches and large irregular squares that filled up on market days with peasants and their carts and booths and jingling donkeys. Traditions reached far back into the Roman past. The main street was named after Ovid, who was born there. There was an aqueduct with pointed arches. Many of the thick-walled houses of squared stone had been built in the fourteen hundreds. The portals of the churches were ornamented with stone carving of the early Renaissance. In the first part of the nineteenth century Sulmona had been a prosperous center of many small industries. Hats were made there and violin strings and textiles. There were many tanneries. The surrounding country was rich in wine, olives, grains; sheep grazed on the grassy slopes, and in the oak woods in the mountains pigs were herded.

Carlo was the sixth child of a well-to-do family. They say that in later life he very much resembled his father, Don Filippo. His mother, Donna Filomena, came of a family of doctors, lawyers, and professional people much respected in the locality. Carlo grew up in a period when the town's prosperity was ebbing. Imported factory-made goods had put the handicraft industries out of business. Sulmona had become a railroad junction with roundhouses and repair shops and had a considerable population of railroad workers. Don Filippo's holdings of farming land had got tangled up in some unfortunate investments, and the family was coming down in the world.

Class lines were immensely rigid in the old Italian towns. The better people wore black broadcloth and starched collars and cuffs and scorned manual labor and everybody connected with it. Two of his elder brothers had managed to continue their studies in medicine and the law, but there was an effervescence about Carlo that kept him from fitting into the strict patterns of bourgeois life. He took to associating with the



Carlo Tresca

peasants and railroad workers. He was even seen eating and drinking with them in wineshops and taverns. He began to identify his life and their lives. He read Marx and Kropotkin. To his family he remained the favorite black sheep, somewhat indulgently nicknamed *il scapestrato*, the scatterbrain.

The social and economic organization of Italy was still semi-feudal. The liberation of the country from the Bourbons had not brought the freedom the patriots of the early part of the century had dreamed of. All over Europe workingmen were boiling with the ideas of the Paris Commune. In Italy the Bourbons

had gone, but the church remained, blocking the way to progress. A certain explosive and direct logic was inborn in the peoples of Latin speech, and they had never lost their early Christian faith in the millennium. Direct action would bring about the revolution which would set workingmen free to take over the good things of the world. Carlo became a Socialist agitator and secretary of the new Railroad Workers' Union, and began to publish a paper called *I Germi* (the *Seeds*), the seeds of revolution.

Impulsive, warm-hearted, with a taste for food and wine and flowers and everything that was lively in men and women, with the special aptitude for leadership of a man born to be looked up to, and with the best type of cold, shrewd Italian brains, he early became a danger to the established order. After a number of clashes with the authorities he had to run off to Switzerland to escape being clapped into jail. He was twenty-four years old.

Immigration to America was at the flood. It was natural that Carlo should be carried west with the great tide of his countrymen. He found himself in America still in Italy, but in an Italy set down in the middle of an unfamiliar exciting society. The immigrant was at the bottom of the heap, but he always had before him the hope of breaking through into prosperity by himself, instead of having to wait for the revolution. Meanwhile there was the struggle for labor organization, for better conditions on the job. Carlo Tresca, with his ready sympathy for anybody in trouble, with his passionate hatred of restraints on himself or anybody else, with his taste for danger, found himself a leader of his people in the class

war. It was a time of bloody strikes, mass-meetings, long-fought engagements in the courts. Careless of money or security, he became a leader of guerrilla forces.

In fighting that war Carlo Tresca learned a great deal about the United States. He never really learned to speak English, but in a way he became an American. He even came to see some of the advantages of the illogical law-abiding, law-twisting procedures of our peculiar type of political evolution. During the last ten years, in his last great fight against the Fascists and Communists, he became in the best sense of the word a conservative. His

last campaigns were all aimed at protecting the Italian population he loved against a new influx of brutal European logic. The great European revolution had turned into a gang war on an immense scale.

Against the gang leaders trying to organize the Italians of America for the destruction of our form of government and of our existence as a nation, Carlo Tresca kept up a subtle and ruthless war. Like most good generals his defense was attack. One day last week he fell into an ambush and was killed. I think it can be truly said that he died in defense of America.

## Russia and the West

BY REINHOLD NIEBUHR

### II

RUSSIA as a national state must find its security after the war, in common with other nations, in some broad scheme of mutual security in which it will deservedly share hegemony with Britain, the United States, and China. But this same Russia maintains an international revolutionary party which ostensibly believes in the march of history toward a world revolution that will solve all internal and international problems upon the basis of worldwide communism. Russia as a nation is forced to work out its salvation within historical complexities which defy all utopian dreams of world redemption. Russia as the fatherland of international communism is a threat to all the nations with which it must ally itself. How is this contradiction to be resolved?

To complicate the matter still further, the international Communist Party, though ostensibly devoted to the cause of world revolution, has increasingly become an instrument of the foreign policy of the Russian state. Through such use it has been discredited in most of the Western countries. There is a class struggle in every one of these nations, and it will probably become a more desperate struggle after the war. But the class structure is more complex than Communist theory envisages. The failure of Marxism to gauge its complexity and to understand the position in it of the agrarians and the lower middle classes was indeed a contributory cause of the rise of fascism. The Communist Party is no longer an effective instrument in the class struggle, not only because its dogmas only partially fit the social complexities of the Western world but also because its special relation to Russia tempts it to subordinate the necessities of the struggle in each nation to Russia's foreign policy.

Since the leaders of the Russian state are not likely to continue to desire revolution in the nations with which Russia is allied, and since in any event there is little

prospect of a revolution on the Russian pattern in those nations, however great the class tensions may become after the war, one would imagine that the liquidation of the Communist Party would be the inevitable strategy of the Russian leaders, who have already proved their willingness to bow to the "logic of facts" and revealed their primary interest in the security of the Russian state. Why do they not follow this policy? Is maintenance of the Communist Party merely a gesture of devotion to the faith of their youth, now discredited by the logic of history? Or does the Russian leadership maintain the party because it regards it as an effective instrument of Russian power in the international tensions which will inevitably appear in even the most favorably balanced world order? If both motives dictate the present Russian policy, the second is unquestionably dominant. The use of the party machine for agitation in favor of a "second front" clearly indicates the primary interest of the Russian leadership.

The question remains whether the Communist Party is in reality an effective instrument of Russian policy and whether it is one which nations allied with Russia can afford to tolerate. In answering that question a sharp distinction must be made between the forms taken by Russian policy on the continent of Europe, in China, and in the two great Anglo-Saxon nations.

In both China and continental Europe the Communist Party has greater potential strength and is a more serviceable instrument of Russian policy than in Britain or America. It is not likely that communism will prevail in China after the war. But on the other hand the Russians may fear that a united and powerful China will demand the withdrawal of Russia from Mongolia, and they may want to maintain the party for whatever bargaining power it may give them.

We do not know to what degree communism has been discredited in either Germany or France by the tortuous

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foreign policy which the party had to follow or to what degree the prestige of communism in Europe will be increased by the ultimate triumph of Russian arms. But it is obvious that communism is still a living creed in large parts of Europe, and there is good reason to believe that it may become a rallying point for elements opposing any efforts to stabilize Europe along traditional lines. The conflict in Yugoslavia between the Chetniks and the Communist-supported partisans is a case in point. American foreign policy, with its dubious flirtation with Vichy and its even more revealing quasi-recognition of the Hapsburgs, is obviously pondering some general plan to prevent the bolshevization of Europe by furthering its domestic reconstruction upon the basis of Catholic loyalties, slightly refurbished dynastic politics, and the use of sobered but hardly regenerate military leaders. Against such a plan Russia is naturally maintaining all its instruments of power. And since the Communist Party in this situation can not only serve Russian policy but strengthen the efforts of the common people to ward off a retrogressive solution of the social problem, it can be a very effective instrument for Russia. Thus the efforts of the American State Department to prevent the spread of communism on the Continent are likely rather to have the opposite effect.

It is significant, however, that Britain is not a whole-hearted party to the ridiculous politics of our State Department. It is obviously disquieted by developments in North Africa. While its impatience with certain aspects of Washington diplomacy is not due solely to its special relations with Russia, it is a fact that these relations are more intimate than the bond between Russia and ourselves and are bound to become even closer. A symbol of the difference is that the isolationists in America still hope that somehow or other Germany and Russia will destroy each other, while the chief British isolationist of yesteryear, Lord Beaverbrook, has become the primary champion of continued collaboration with Russia.

Anglo-Russian collaboration after the war is bound to be intimate because the two nations will need each other in the stabilization of Europe whatever the framework of international relations. The British are still quite uncertain about our continued partnership after the war. They cannot be sure that we shall not try once more to disavow the responsibilities of our power, or at least to reach a mean between isolationism and interventionism that will satisfy both these impulses in our population. The British are much more certain of Russia as a partner than of us. Even in the event of our collaboration they would require Russia as a counterweight against our superior power. I do not suggest that the world can or ought to be organized again in terms of a precarious balance of power. I suggest merely that the strength of opposing forces is bound to be considered in even the most ideally conceived world organization, just as it is

in domestic politics. It may be added that though a radical revolution is hardly likely in Britain, there is every indication that domestic politics there will have more affinities with Russian collectivism than with the very probable efforts of post-war America to throw off the political restraints which have been placed upon industry and to make one more adventure in laissez faire.

Whatever the differences between British and American politics, it is clear that the Communist Party cannot usefully serve social revolution or Russian policy in either of the English-speaking nations. It is too obviously a tool of the Russian state. Nations resent nothing quite so much as the manipulation of domestic political forces by a foreign power. The loyalty of the Communist Party to Russia has become particularly odious among us because it must always hide its loyalty behind pretended devotion to some mythical international working class. The inconsistencies of Russian foreign policy, understandable when viewed purely as parts of the policy of a state seeking to maintain a precarious security in an unstable world, become ridiculous when defended as furthering the welfare of an international proletariat.

The continuance of the Communist Party will actually be an embarrassment to good relations between us and Russia for the simple reason that international policies which would be mutually beneficial to both nations will be rejected by our reactionaries on the ground that Communist advocacy of them proves them to be beneficial only to Russia. We have a suspicion that the Russians will mistakenly regard the maintenance of the party as more necessary among us than in Britain. The ties of common interest between us and Russia will be less strong than the ties between Russia and Britain; the friction will be greater. But that is all the more reason why the irrelevancies of Communist Party politics should not be allowed to aggravate the friction.

The Russians can hardly be expected to know the Western world well enough to understand this hazard to mutual relations. That is why in a post-war settlement we may have to demand something analogous to the banishment of the Jesuits in the Peace of Westphalia. That banishment was not completely successful, and our efforts may not completely succeed either. Even if Stalin should liquidate the Communist Party in the Anglo-Saxon world, he is certainly not powerful enough to liquidate orthodox communism as the creed of a minority of intellectuals and workers. If he cuts it adrift, it will probably revert to its purer, more international, and more apocalyptic form. It will in short become Trotskyite. It will be fatuous rather than dangerous. At least it will not embarrass, by its support, the only possible settlement of world problems, a settlement in which Russia as a nation must be allied with the other powerful nations in the hegemony of a world organization.

*[The first part of this article appeared last week.]*

# The Red Army Hits Its Stride

BY DONALD W. MITCHELL

**T**WICE the Red Army has rolled back the Wehrmacht as it stood on the verge of success. But this winter's Russian victories are different from last year's in having strategic as well as tactical importance; they contain the threat of continued offensives more dangerous than any Germany has faced in the war.

On November 19 the initiative passed into Soviet hands with startling suddenness when Red Army units pushed against both bases of the Stalingrad salient in an attempt to encircle the attacking Germans. The move was definitely a surprise to the Nazis, and until their reserves slowed down its early impetus, the drive inflicted heavy casualties and made large gains. But though it rendered the German position much more critical, it did not entirely succeed as an encircling move.

A few days later action opened on the central front, in the Rzhev-Vyazma-Velikie Luki triangle, where the Russians had long enjoyed superiority in force but had been unable during the summer months to make a genuine break-through. The objective of this drive was to cut off German communications by land with the troops besieging Leningrad and thus to help in raising the siege and at the same time endanger the German troops north of the Russian offensive line. German resistance in this area proved extremely strong, though the capture of Velikie Luki, one of the strong German fortresses, and the partial encirclement of Rzhev represented definite tactical gains. They might also mean that an answer had been found to the Germans' "hedgehog" defense, which had been singularly successful in guarding important outposts in 1942. However, the large number of fortified strong points remaining in German control in the immediate vicinity and the distance a successful thrust would have to cover indicated that this Red Army offensive could not constitute an immediate major threat.

Far more important was the offensive launched south of Voronezh along the middle Don on December 16. To all appearances the Germans were again unprepared, and two break-throughs were scored, as they later admitted in their communiqués, one along a front of more than fifty miles. Both spearheads advanced southward at a rapid rate, inflicting extremely heavy casualties and capturing or by-passing several German fortified points.

It is quite possible that this march south through the Don valley, led by General Nikolai Vatutin, may prove the most important single maneuver of the war. It offered a twofold threat. Moving south, the Russians passed to the rear of the partially surrounded Axis divisions at

Stalingrad, and on January 1 a Soviet communiqué stated that the army of the middle Don had made a junction with a Soviet spearhead which had renewed the advance southwest of Stalingrad, thus isolating forces estimated to consist of twenty-two divisions of German and Rumanian troops and drawing a band of steel across their only line of retreat. In early January the Red armies started to constrict the German pocket.

The second purpose served by the push down the middle Don was greater though less immediate than the sealing of the Stalingrad salient. After their initial progress had been slowed by strong resistance, the Russian columns again gathered momentum, and at the moment of writing they are reported to be less than sixty miles from Rostov. The opening of a fourth and inexplicably strong Russian offensive in the North Caucasus in late December and the advance of spearheads southwest from Stalingrad to flank the German Caucasus conquests increase the danger to the whole German position in southeastern Russia. The strongly fortified and well-equipped key points upon which German defenses rested last year have not proved serious obstacles in the south. The size of their forces in this area, their steady loss of ground, the insufficiency of the exit across the Kerch Peninsula, and the narrowing corridor north of Rostov are factors which the Germans can scarcely afford to disregard. Their position is becoming militarily untenable.

The entire winter campaign is a high tribute to the Soviet High Command, especially to Vatutin, who has been the most successful among the field commanders. For the first time in the war the Red Army chiefs appear to have out-thought and out-maneuvered their opponents. Victories this year are not primarily the result of cold weather; the comparatively mild winter seems to have conferred its greatest benefits on the Russians. While no more land has been regained than was recovered last winter, the areas taken have been far more important, and the offensive is still young. The continued blows in many widely separated regions suggest that the Russians have retained their numerical superiority and have also considerable industrial strength left. Improvement in leadership and tactics has been marked. In rapidity of movement the Red Army now rivals the Wehrmacht. It has found the offensive punch which it formerly lacked.

But Russian strength is not the whole story. German lines of communication are long and hard to maintain. The North African campaign has probably diverted few troops, but it has drawn off some of the dwindling



January 23, 1943

strength of the Luftwaffe. Rising plane production in the Allied countries, plus bombing for which the Germans are unable to retaliate effectively, is taking away from Hitler the ability to maintain aerial superiority in Russia or anywhere else. The long eastern campaign has caused a severe drain on his man-power with no let-up in sight, and the reserve divisions which he had hoped to rest during the winter have had to be thrown in to avert disaster.

The Russian front has always been the hardest one to interpret, and several mysteries in the current situation have not yet been satisfactorily cleared up. The first concerns the German situation at Stalingrad. According to orthodox military ideas the 300,000 Axis troops there are slated for destruction. Yet last winter smaller garrisons occupying strong positions were surrounded and nevertheless maintained themselves until spring. Supply was one of the headaches of the German officers before Stalingrad even in the early fall, and it seems highly unlikely that an entire winter's supplies could have been accumulated. Yet nothing in recent communiqués has suggested frantic efforts to break out of a closing trap. Another interesting question is whether General Vatutin's Don armies, with enemy troops to the east, west, and south, are themselves safe from being encircled in turn. The German retreat in the northern Caucasus, where Soviet forces have long been weak, is hard to account for unless it was necessitated by threats elsewhere.

Though reports from Sweden have generally been unreliable, a fairly plausible explanation of the riddle of southern Russia recently appeared from that source. It was to the effect that a break occurred between Hitler and the General Staff when Hitler demanded a continuance of the fruitless attempts to take Stalingrad and reversed the decision of the army chiefs to withdraw to an easily defended winter line. The yes man, Zeitzler, tried to carry out Hitler's program, failed, and is now undertaking, under much more difficult conditions, the retreat to prepared positions planned for earlier in the season. This explanation, if true, may help to account for the large number of prisoners taken and their indifferent morale. It may also solve the mystery of the behavior of the German armies before Stalingrad and the rather surprising way in which they have been outgeneraled and outmaneuvered. It may well be that Hitler is again replacing his veteran generals with yes men whom he trusts to carry out his intuitions.

All these things point toward eventual defeat of the Axis, but it must be remembered that territorial gains in Russia do not alone mean an early end of the European phase of the war. In case of necessity the German armies could retreat for hundreds of miles over scorched earth before being compelled to defend their homeland, and the Nazis will not give up before they are thoroughly whipped.

Russian victories are of vital interest to the United Nations from still another standpoint. They have delayed the necessity for an immediate opening of a second front, thus allowing time for further preparation and also for recovery from the renewed U-boat campaign, which, though it has not received much attention, is again cutting heavily into our shipping. But on this score we can, perhaps, comfort ourselves with the knowledge that Hitler's submarine successes are purchased at the cost of losses elsewhere, notably in the air. As he faces steadily increasing threats from many directions, his own powers are dwindling. Any move like the reinforcement of Tunisia is paid for by defeats elsewhere. Time is no longer fighting for the Axis.

## In the Wind

**B**OAKE CARTER'S recently sworn allegiance to an "old Hebraic faith" has had considerable effect on his newspaper column. In a recent article which asks that the war be called the War of Expiation he says: "It may well be that Stalin is indeed another Cyrus, as reported in this dispatch recently, raised up by God to assist the Anglo-Saxon Celtic-Judaic people, as once before in man's history."

AN ORDER to reduce by a quarter of an inch the size of the wire clips that hold paper matches together will save, according to WPB figures, 200,000 pounds of steel a year.

FROM the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette*: "Meadville's District Number 2 [draft] board has been ordered to send ninety-eight men and five Negroes on November 4."

THE SIX LEADING trade unionists in Jamaica, B. W. I., have been imprisoned by the government for allegedly undermining morale.

A NEW YORK news letter, the *Rubicon*, has this to say about a proposed Italian-American good-will mission to North Africa: "Certainly, no appointment should be made of persons who have been militant anti-Fascists."

GEORGE SPIES, INC., a leading manufacturer of school jewelry, recently made this patriotic appeal to high-school principals: "A large proportion of our plant and personnel has been turned over to the war effort, and we need all the school jewelry business we can handle to help finance our war work."

IN THIS COLUMN for January 9 it was announced that Max Eastman would explain Ely Culbertson's plan for post-war organization in the March issue of *Reader's Digest*. Mr. Culbertson himself has written an article about his plan for the February issue of that magazine.

[We invite our readers to submit material for *In the Wind*—either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of \$5 will be awarded each month for the best item.—EDITORS THE NATION.]



## *As Simple as That*

BY J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

FOR nearly four months now this section has been hammering away at certain specific points. We have considered them important enough to return to again and again. The points are these:

1. Hitler and his Axis accomplices will try everything before giving up.
2. Should he be obliged, for the moment, to renounce conquest by offensive, Hitler will intrench himself in "Fortress Europe," the stronghold fabricated out of the territories occupied or still to be occupied, and will try to win the war by way of peace maneuvers, cultivating disunity among the Allies and persuading them that an invasion of Europe would cost untold millions of men only to plunge them thereafter into bolshevism and chaos.
3. To disregard the fact that the defeat of the Axis still requires all our strength, to believe that morale can be sustained by cheap optimism and headlines screeching victory, is to do exactly the opposite of what the character and dimensions of this war demand. If it takes months to conquer Tunisia and Bizerte, the task will not be easier when it comes to storming the Brenner Pass.
4. When we gamble on dissension inside Germany we turn this war into a kind of Belmont track. Betting on the Reichswehr horse against the party's—on the generals against Hitler—is sheer waste of time. It is equally fruitless to trust to the diplomacy of appeasement to win over to the Allied cause the Francos who go about shrouded in a fiction of non-belligerence. In spite of the "Iberian bloc," in spite of assurances apparently given to Allied ambassadors, Franco in the end will march with Hitler.
5. The peoples of the United Nations have taken to heart the statements of their leaders—the Atlantic Charter, the four freedoms, the "century of the common man"—and they will not easily permit the reaction to present them with a world order no better than the one which produced two wars in the space of twenty-five years.
6. At the first sign of military success—hardly had the American troops landed in North Africa and hardly had the Russian advance made itself felt—reaction threw off its mask, discarded in an hour all pretense that this was a war for democracy, and prepared in every way to make good its own victory at the moment when hostilities should cease.

It is on these six points that we have tried to concentrate the attention of our readers. Whether the subject was political strategy in Latin America or Asia, whether it was a Darlanist or a Hapsburg maneuver, whether it was a speech of Hitler's or the anti-British and anti-American excesses of Radio Falange, writers of different nationalities have agreed on the essentials. This agreement is itself proof of the universal character of the present war. It is also proof that the name given to this section was no caprice, that this war is in large measure a political war, and that it is in this field, more than in the military or economic fields, that the United Nations still find themselves in a precarious position.

In every war—and in this one perhaps most of all—the thing that matters most is to know where one really stands, and to recognize what are the strong and the weak points on the enemy side and on one's own side. On the side of the United Nations the one weak point, and perhaps the only possibility of defeat, lies in the lack of a leadership capable of reaping the full benefit from the advantage that the Allies' superiority in material resources, in man-power, and above all in war aims gives them. With all his strength and stubbornness, with his ten years' head start in preparation, with Fortress Europe armed to the farthest corner, with the Francos and Laval all on his side, Hitler still cannot escape defeat if the democracies eventually decide to wage the only kind of war that can inflame the enthusiasm of free men.

Up to now there has been little evidence that things are looked at this way in those quarters where the conduct of the war is planned and executed. Instead of emphasizing the idea of a people's war as the struggle progresses, the people, their desires, and their reactions have more and more been shoved aside. More and more the war is being looked upon as purely a job for the generals, and the peace as an object on which the future "authorities of the United Nations," now being turned out in series on the assembly lines at certain American universities, will demonstrate their superior sagacity. The result is already to be seen. For every step forward in the military sphere we have moved two steps backward politically, and this procession has in turn reacted unfavorably on the military operations.

A growing irritation and mistrust is weakening the common front of the forces aligned against the Axis. It doesn't help much that identity of feelings and purposes is exalted in official messages and telegraphic greetings

exchanged on birthdays between chiefs of states. The facts speak for themselves with all the weight of their undisputed existence. When a magazine like *Time* runs a leading article entitled "Disunited Nations," when the British Prime Minister has to call a secret meeting to tell the House of Commons what he thinks of the political deal in North Africa, when only last week the British censor considered it necessary to prevent certain editorials in London papers from being cabled over here, when in his remarkable dispatch from London in the *New York Herald Tribune* on January 13 Geoffrey Parsons, Jr., says that our foreign policy "is under question by our allies as it has not been for many years," when one hears on all sides the urgent need for "committees of the United Nations"—then the offices of Elmer Davis and of the British Ministry of Information are put to a pretty severe test. And such differences of opinion are no less great between others of the nations of the Allied coalition. In the face of all this it seems hardly necessary to produce further proof of the lack of political leadership on the side of the democracies.

It is this lack of leadership that is responsible for a situation which, if it continues, will hamper the military effort and delay victory, if it does not compromise the outcome of the war. Moreover, it may create such antagonism between the Allies that when the war is over there will be no common purpose upon which to build the international organization that alone can make impossible a Third World War.

It has already led to a sad state of confusion. Listening to commentators on the radio or in the press this past week, one could hardly avoid the impression that the real enemy in North Africa was the Fighting French, who placed so many difficulties in the way of an agreement with the former Vichy collaborationists. For some of us this is no new experience. At more than one meeting of the Council of the League of Nations I had to contend with gentlemen for whom the real aggressor in the Spanish war was not Germany or Italy, which by invading Spain had torn up the League Covenant, but the Republican government which dared to burden the Council with its troubles.

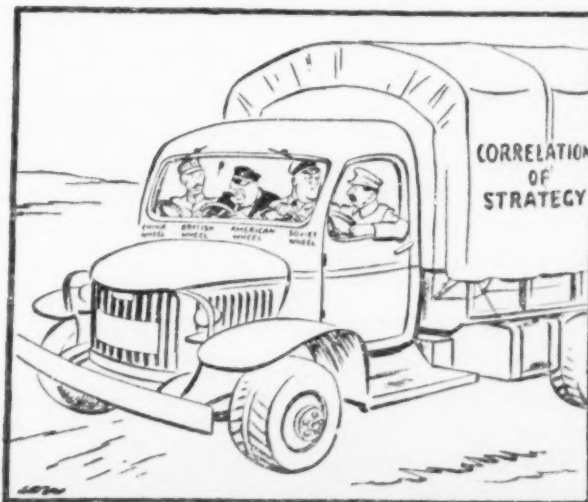
The same thing is happening again. And the danger is that Americans of good faith—the others, the appeasers, know well enough what is going on and what they themselves are up to—will be completely at a loss. The danger is that they will put the blame for what is happening, not on the lack of a straight political line for the conduct of the war, but on the peoples of Europe, of Asia, of Latin America—those irresponsible who don't appreciate the sacrifices that the United States and other great powers are making to save them from a Hitler victory. Most of all, the danger is that they may come to believe that there is only one set of alternatives: either to impose the American point of view, or if pos-

sible the Anglo-American point of view, by an action combining relief to the distressed countries with a paternal but strong hand that would put an end to so-called "factional rivalries," or, once the security of the Western Hemisphere is obtained by military defeat of the Axis, to give the whole thing up and go back to the isolationism of the last twenty years.

No, we are not confined to such a calamitous choice. There is a much more rational alternative. Wage this war as a war of the people for a democratic victory and for a democratic peace. Fight for democracy without being afraid of the democratic world that will come in the end even if we must go through a painful period of disorder and revolution.

To take this position it is really only necessary to remember one thing, a thing that seems to have been forgotten lately: that this war was started by fascism, and that the real point of issue between the two sides is fascism as against anti-fascism. For this war to make sense it must be a war of democracy against fascism, allowing for no possibility of an alliance between fascists and anti-fascists, or of regarding semi-fascists as friends and true anti-fascists as undesirables.

Just by remembering that this is a war between fascism and anti-fascism it will become clear why in North Africa the French anti-fascists don't want to collaborate with ex-Vichy fascists; why Austrian democrats can't cotton to the idea of restoring an Otto von Hapsburg who, though undoubtedly not a fascist himself, is not likely to take a stand against the clerical reaction through which the little Metternichs of our time hope to neutralize the effects of Russian victory. It will become clear why Latin American leaders insist that if the invasion of Europe would start with Spain and restore the Spanish Republic, the Allies could count on the whole-hearted support of Latin America. It will become clear why Lin Yutang, in the last issue, denounced the men "associated with the London Non-Intervention Committee and with the Munich era." And it will become clear that years of



"NOW SUPPOSING WE ALL TRY TO GO SOMEWHERE TOGETHER."

fascist crimes have created a problem that must be contemplated with courage and imagination; and that a fundamental revolutionary process is under way which must go on to its bitter end and which cannot be cured by canned milk and vitamins, seasoned with a dash of democracy.

Just by remembering that this is a war between fascism and anti-fascism people will discover what is at the root of the evil in the present crisis of the United Nations and what is the way out. No complicated or tortuous interpretations are needed. Fascism against anti-fascism. It's as simple as that.

## Anti-Semitism: Norway

BY HAAKON LIE

*Secretary, Executive Board of the Trade Unions of Norway*

IN THE minds of my people the attack on our Jewish compatriots is the cruelest thing that ever happened in our country. For Norwegians it has always been a matter of course that all people had the right to enjoy the freedom we so jealously guarded. We never had a race problem. That is why the Quisling attempt to create a problem met with such instant protest, and why the atrocities which followed have provoked the deepest feelings of bitterness, hatred, and sorrow.

As long as the Nazis still hoped to conciliate us, they paid heed to the protests and forbade the local Quislings to proceed with their plans. But when they understood that Norwegians refused to take part in the "New Order," an open fight broke out, and the Jews, as always, became the chief scapegoats.

From the time Quisling was made Minister President in February, 1942, things went worse for the Jews. A new decree was issued which denied them the right to remain in Norway. We didn't take this too seriously because we didn't see how it could be carried out. But soon we learned. Quisling, wishing to give his regime the semblance of legality, called a National Assembly to which were invited representatives of the various industrial and commercial organizations, among them the Nazi-controlled trade unions. The plan failed completely because the workers resigned in a body. This action, organized by our underground leadership, was a high spot in our movement of resistance. The prestige of the Germans received a serious blow, and they now had to find other ways and other agents.

Shortly after this affair an incident occurred near the Swedish border. A Norwegian who was helping two Jews escape shot a Quisling border policeman. This was used as a pretext for a systematic attack directed against the whole Jewish population. A decree ordering the confiscation of all property belonging to Jews was followed by an order to arrest all Jewish men and boys

over fifteen years of age. Eight hundred were sent to concentration camps, and Jewish families were robbed of their clothing, their jewelry, even their wedding rings. The climax was reached on November 26, when 1,000 Jewish men, women, and children were herded aboard a 9,000-ton ship bound for Poland. These Norwegians will never again see their homeland.

Try as they would, the people of Oslo were unable to stop the deportation of their countrymen. Crowds gathered at the barriers of the pier—the police had to block off the whole district. The police showed their sympathy, but they could not disobey orders.

Norwegian church organizations and Norwegians individually have protested against these horrors. But anyone who signs a letter or a declaration does so at the risk of his freedom, if not of his life. More than one Norwegian has in this way signed his own death sentence. The Nazi terror, however, only renews our will to fight. "A people conquered but not vanquished is the victor."

## Behind the Enemy Line

BY ARGUS

THE title of the American "White Book," "Peace and War," reminds me of Tolstoy, and so do its contents. As proof that America was guiltless of causing the war the volume is completely successful; as a record of accomplishment it is rather depressing. Public opinion here sensed that fact, and the book's appearance had few reverberations.

It was a real surprise to hear its echoes resounding in Germany as if they would never end. When I say "in Germany" I mean within Germany itself. Material sent from Germany to foreign countries, by wire or wireless, included very little about the "White Book." Nor was it more than touched on in the news served up to the occupied regions. The German people, however, were treated to an overwhelming bombardment of comments. Certainly German newspaper readers and radio listeners read and heard ten times as much about it as Americans.

The drumfire began promptly on the day of publication in Washington and continued for a whole week. Editorials appeared in serial form; column-long quotations from Italian, Japanese, and all kinds of Quisling newspapers gave samples of "world opinion." M. Laval, an undisputed expert in world politics, was dragged on the scene. Countless neutrals, including a Portuguese so-called "historian," were mobilized. Documents were dug up in refutation, allegedly from the archives of the conquered nations. On the third day the German newspapers in a body dedicated their front pages to the subject. At the press conferences in the Wilhelmstrasse the well-known government spokesman Dr. Schmidt discussed it



## Non-Intervention

*"If the political and social institutions of this country undergo change or modification in future years it will be the work of Spaniards within Spain, not of the United States or of Spanish émigrés.—*

*From a speech by Ambassador Hayes in Madrid on January 15, 1943.*

four times. And morning, noon, and night, variations on the theme came over the radio.

It is interesting to observe the technique used in a dictatorship for putting across a campaign of this sort. Never once were any passages quoted from the "White Book." Disproof, unmasking, revilements poured out in a cataract, but not the most rudimentary abstract of the contents was given. The only concrete fact communicated to the public was that the United States tried to place the blame for the war on the Axis.

The Goebbels argument was developed along three main lines. First, the "White Book" was presented as evidence of growing difficulties within the United States and between the Allies. "The hand of the Jewish master-criminal Roosevelt can be clearly traced in it. The real reason for its issuance at this time was the meeting of the new Congress." The attention of Congress was to be diverted from the Administration's failures and the necessity of new sacrifices. Or, as Schmidt of the Wilhelmstrasse expressed it, "Economic difficulties and the draft have created so much unrest in America that Roosevelt had to issue the 'White Book' to try to overcome it." The American reader of Ambassador Grew's recent book will be astonished to learn that the "Report from Tokyo" also necessitated the publication of the "White Book." There was "great popular indignation" in the United States because the President had "refused to act upon Ambassador Grew's reports and adopt a policy of appeasement toward Japan." The mood of the English people was cited as another reason for the fabrication. "Britain begins to realize that Roosevelt's megalomaniac policy embraces the destruction of the British Empire."

Secondly, the "White Book" was called a "monstrous forgery," "the most shameless diplomatic document ever published." "The diplomats who concocted it and whose reports are reproduced in it are well-known crooks. The character of the documents is especially well illustrated by the author of one—Mr. Douglas Miller, the former commercial attaché who wrote 'You Can't Do Business with Hitler.' This is the swindler Miller." He was usually found engaged in "criminal not diplomatic transactions," was often "under investigation by the Berlin police, and was obliged to leave his post in great haste."

Thirdly, it was charged that the "White Book" itself provided incontestable proof that Roosevelt, not Hitler, was responsible for the war. "The document is the most

severe bill of indictment ever brought against Roosevelt." "Every page presents proof of American guilt." It "clearly demonstrates that as far back as 1937 Roosevelt had decided to drive Europe into war and in the ensuing turmoil set up a Jewish empire." It "historically confirms for all time that Franklin D. Roosevelt was guilty of launching the Second World War to an even greater degree than his friend Churchill."

As I said above, such a voluminous reaction from Berlin was a complete surprise. The Nazi leadership was under no apparent compulsion to make such an uproar, for the Allies would have found it technically impossible to pump many details from the book into the German people; 144 pages of compact diplomatic reports are not easily popularized in short radio broadcasts suitable for furtive listeners. There seemed to be no necessity for Goebbels to "refute" and "unmask" so extensively. We should have expected rather that he would content himself with a few belittling remarks.

If he departed from his usual custom he must have believed he had good reason to do so. It looks as if the Germans were increasingly occupied with a question on which their morale greatly depends. It is not the most important question for them; that, of course, is will they win the war. But the more doubtful they feel about this question the more urgently the second presses for an answer: Was the war really necessary? The Nazi leadership seems to feel that the people are reverting to this question more and more frequently. Hence its excessive reaction to an event which might ever so slightly nourish the people's doubts. Under other conditions the "White Book" might well have been ignored; it seemed necessary at this time to try to smother it under an avalanche of counter-propaganda.

## Nazi "Socialism"

FROM the Bulletin of the International Federation of Trade Unions we get this interesting illustration of the workings of industrial National Socialism. Wage ceilings in Germany are so low that it is only by means of individual increase of production that workers are able to meet the rising cost of living. But the "joker" here is that as soon as a whole group succeeds in increasing its output the scale of the contract is lowered on the ground of "technical improvements." Of course the employer gets state aid—he often receives advances on government orders up to 50 per cent of their value. In one of the largest and best-known building companies funds thus obtained exceed the amount of its own capital. With such aid it is not to be wondered that the great armament concerns are accumulating enormous reserves. The "Gute Hoffnung" mining combine has increased its capital out of its own means from 80,000,000 to 104,000,000 marks. The Rochling-Buderus steel works has trebled its stock capital out of dormant reserves. This firm is, to be sure, very close to the government. The owner is Herr Rochling, a member of the Reich's Munitions Council.

## File and Remember

[Each week on this page we shall print items, short and long, taken from the British press or, less frequently, from that of other countries.]

### Fear of Betrayal

WE ARE not alone in feeling an uneasy curiosity about the recent mission of the American envoy, Mr. Myron Taylor, to the Vatican. The propertied conservative class in America, terrified lest communism or socialism should play a part in the creation of the new Europe, tends to look on clerical fascism as the most hopeful alternative. That is why it smiled on Darlan, on Franco, and now on Otto Hapsburg.

No irreparable harm has yet been done, though in France as among ourselves the fear of a betrayal is undermining the confidence of youth in the men, on both sides of the Atlantic, who lead us. While the Americans reproach us, with only too much justice, about freedom in India, we have our own grounds for doubting them. We are glad that our own government has treated the Fighting French fairly by placing them, under General Le Gentilhomme, in charge of Madagascar. . . . General de Gaulle, because he was the first soldier of distinction who refused in the hour of collapse to despair, has become the symbol of resistance. There is always a danger in accepting any soldier, even in war time, as a political leader. The merit of General de Gaulle in our eyes is that he is acting with this underground movement (socialist, radical, and democratic-Catholic), in which we see the hope of the future.—*New Statesman and Nation* (London).

### On Power Politics

National power politics carried on by the traditional ruling classes of the traditional Continental countries—it is a most fascinating spectacle to see these rising like a phoenix out of the ashes of the "New Order." If the process becomes more marked, as it probably will, it will provide many tempting opportunities to political warfare—and many dangers to the building of a stable peace. We have no reason to discourage developments which may contribute to a speedier collapse of our enemies. But we have still less reason to encourage them to anything like the point of even the slightest commitment. We certainly have no ill-will against any European nation—or class—as such. But we can never sacrifice the interests of those who stood by us in our dark hours and suffered in our cause to those who tried to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds.—*The Observer*.

### "No Negotiations in Progress"

In the House of Commons yesterday a Labor member asked Mr. Eden "whether the government in consultation with the United States and the U. S. S. R. is preparing a common program of post-war economic cooperation so as to carry into effect the objects of the Atlantic Charter, the lend-lease agreement, and the Anglo-Russian agreement."

Mr. Eden replied, "Although no negotiations are at pres-

ent in progress, the British government has every intention of working with these and other nations toward such a common program."

The situation, therefore, is that the governments have still to come to brass tacks. "Contacts," "talks," and "intentions" must not be confused with negotiations. The planning of post-war reconstruction is still in a tentative stage. Those of us who hoped that a rapid advance had begun must realize that, so far, the governments are proceeding at a slow march. Nor is it yet certain that they are all in step.

Cannot the pace be quickened? How long, we wonder, will preliminary contacts and conversations go on? How soon will long-distance diplomacy give place to decisive conferences? How soon will the round table, rather than the ocean cable, become the means of communication? . . .

We urge the government to examine with critical eyes the machinery by which the preliminaries are being conducted. We urge it to seek methods of speeding up that machinery. . . . If we stumble into the next peace as blindly as we stumbled into the last one, the consequences of our negligence will dwarf even the present catastrophe.—*Daily Herald*.

### Open City?

I suspect that most of the arguments we hear for and against bombing Rome have, like the flowers that bloom in the spring, nothing to do with the case.

There are people who look on Rome as holy ground, not because it has been made sacred by the blood of martyrs, but because of the political influence it can wield among reactionary elements in Europe who may be ready to do a Darlan on the Axis. They are looking to the clerical fascism Darlan represented to establish the political guaranties that a "liberated" Europe is not a socialist Europe.—*Reynolds' News*.

### Controlled Enterprise

Mr. Morrison [in his first public address since he became a member of the War Cabinet] was clear that much of the social control of production made necessary by the war will need to be continued into the peace, if the high purposes which the nation has set before it are to be attained. Control must not operate to stifle the essential spirit of initiative, enterprise, and adventure. As Mr. Morrison said, no natural reason exists why control should be a cramping, limiting thing. Properly exercised, it should be stimulating and enlarging. He reminded his hearers that enterprise does not need to be private in order to be enterprise. In this century, with its inevitable tendency toward centralized organization, private management has often resulted in restriction, in a slowing down of activity, and in consequent unemployment, while many of the most remarkable examples of enterprise have been public. Mr. Morrison instanced the electric grid in this country, the great constructive work of the Tennessee Valley Authority in the United States, and engineering and industrial achievements in Russia. Russian needs and conditions are very different from ours; but it cannot be without significance that so much vigor and imagination and spirit of adventure should have proved not incompatible with public control.—*The Times* (London).

# BOOKS *and the* ARTS

## A Modern Socrates

LET THE PEOPLE KNOW. By Norman Angell. The Viking Press. \$2.50.

THE pages of contemporary criminal fiction are sometimes brightened by a device known as the "lie-detector." This mechanical instrument is never quite convincing. Completely convincing, however, both in the precision of its aim, the sensitivity of its recording, and the unsparing honesty of its operation, is the sociological lie-detector by now perfected by Norman Angell. His method is that of Socrates, as of every great teacher: carefully, patiently, candidly he extracts and assembles the questions that bother the plain man. Stating them fairly, he draws out their often unconscious emotional associations. Then he subjects them to an analysis as vigorous as it is frank. Names vanish; things emerge. A mass of confused particulars is finally assembled into a significant pattern.

His new book is, I think, the most successful and the most useful example he has given us of the application of this method. Its title aptly indicates its purpose: let the people know what it is all about, this war in which their present and their future are involved. Let them, above all let the boys who are perhaps to die and certainly to endure long and hideous hardships, understand why this horror is upon us again after twenty-five years of fears and fumbings, so that we see what we must do, to prevent its rhythmic recurrence. The "quality of the public mind, the quality of the common people's political judgment," is the vital factor in the shaping of our society. If it is confused and divided, no blueprint will save us. "The present miseries of the world are not due to lack of 'book-learning,' but to lack of better understanding of the great commonplaces of human association."

It is therefore to these "great commonplaces" that the lively and eminently readable pages of this book are mainly devoted. Its text—a text central to democracy—can best be stated in the author's own words: it is that "the right of each to life must be defended collectively or it cannot be defended at all; that if we will not defend the rights of others against violence, we shall be unable to defend our own and will ourselves become the victims of that violence." War came because we failed to see this in time, allowed violence to destroy its victims one by one. Peace will not endure unless we act on conviction. At present it is blurred for the average mind; issues, often rooted in ignorance, constantly and skilfully exploited by the enemy, confuse and divide it and conceal its vital outline. It is Norman Angell's primary task to clear away the confusion and heal the division by lifting into the light and faithfully exploring a series of questions, constantly felt but less often fully discussed—awkward questions, heavy with unconscious feeling, about British imperialism, Russian communism, India, the "old school tie," the New Deal. This task he performs with the skill of a great surgeon. Thus he clears away a mass of dead

tissue he has found surrounding the current view of the British Empire by clearly expounding the Statute of Westminster of 1931, and showing how the statute carried to its final stage, so far as the dominions are concerned, a process of transfer of full responsibility—the same process which is approaching fruition in India and being prepared for in the colonies by steps appropriate to their various levels of development. Talk of British "ownership" is today absurd and wholly unreal: the various parts of the Commonwealth have achieved through friendly discussion the freedom the United States had to win by fighting. To loosen such a free association of peoples would not only be to play the dictators' game for them; it would be to undermine the principle on which alone we can build a stable world of growing freedom. Slowly and painfully social science has brought us to realize that the isolated and self-sufficient individual cannot exist. The same is true of nations. Safety, freedom, growth depend on a cooperation that allows scope for difference. To maintain and extend such cooperation between Britain and the United States is the main object of this honest, faithful, and stimulating book.

MARY AGNES HAMILTON

## Artists in a Society

ENGLISH PAINTERS: HOGARTH TO CONSTABLE.

By Andrew C. Ritchie. Johns Hopkins Press. \$2.25.

ENGLISH painting charms by its paradoxes: by the spectacle of a general tradition of minor and mediocre effort giving birth to three masters and several schools of great and even revolutionary stature; by a continuity of aesthetic servility that extends, on human and social grounds, an appeal as irresistible as that offered by any modern nation. Roger Fry went so far as to declare that its limitations were due to "what amounts to a congenital optical deficiency," and no observer can remain unaware that his own vision, applied to British painters, is obstructed by everything from the social and personal distractions of an era of good taste like the eighteenth century to the suffocating anecdotalism of the Victorians. Yet these discouragements provide the integrity of the genuine talent with great and dramatic antecedent advantages: thus the luster that attaches to Hogarth, Bonington, Constable, Blake, and the Norwich school; thus the wit and independence that absolve the limitations of Romney, Cotman, Brown, Rowlandson, and the satirists; thus also, alas, the weight that drags at the powers of Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Turner and wholly sinks most men even a shade less talented than these in the bogs of fashion, academicism, political melodrama, moral utilitarianism. The steadily recurring taste that led a nation to its periodic triumphs in line drawing, handicraft, folk art, cabinet-making, and architecture operated at the feeblest possible level in pictorial art, obviously because this medium was the one most amenable to the ethical obsessions of the English, to the uses of bourgeois flattery in portraits and



subject-pieces, to the hunger for imperial exoticism and the discreet removal of human terrors, passions, violence, and abomination to the confines of those enormous frames of glaring goldleaf which now represent the only money value in the galleries of the Victorian potentates. English painting is usually literary but it is seldom poetic. It offers the compromises, utility, and embarrassments of prose.

Its history, as apart from the consideration of its isolated geniuses, cannot be written without the reinforcement of the conditions in society, thought, and literature that explain its successes in satire, illustration, and characterization. But where the chauvinistic scholarship of earlier days justified English painters by these facts, recent criticism has reversed that procedure—which was fundamentally the procedure even of Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites—by setting the English product against its Continental rivals, accepting the initial sacrifice entailed by that contrast, and rescuing the surviving talents on sanely judicial grounds. Or it has frankly accepted the secondary status of the art, and by relating painting to moral, literary, and utilitarian motives, produced a series of the most valuable cultural studies we have had in recent years of the extra-aesthetic role occupied by painting as an underprivileged servant of social progress—invariably the least considerate of its masters. Fry, Wilenski, Binyon, Read, and Roger Hinks have led the first of these activities; the second has produced such valuable studies as Elizabeth Manwaring's "Italian Landscape in Eighteenth Century England," Christopher Hussey's "The Picturesque," John Steegman's "The Rule of Taste," and Kenneth Clark's "The Gothic Revival."

Mr. Ritchie's book—lectures given at Johns Hopkins—is not to be compared with these in length, detail, or documentation, being a slighter sketch on the order of C. B. Tinker's "Painter and Poet." It starts by disavowing a defensive position on its subject and by hoping to show that the mercantile and industrial prosperity which enslaved the average English painter after 1688 also accounts for the creative individualism whereby "Hogarth, Blake, and Constable foreshadow the determined independence of a Cézanne and Picasso." His chapters on Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Blake, and Turner and Constable say many good things: about the difference between moralism and satire in Hogarth, about Reynolds's compromises and the deadly dishonesty they have fostered ever since at the Royal Academy, about the contrast between Turner's reckless eclecticism and Constable's heroic tenacity of purpose, about how Blake extended the resources of painting by the "inevitable struggle with material means of representation which all great artists, and none less than Picasso in our own day, have experienced in a search for a more complete externalization of their visions." All this points to the fundamental significance of a monument like English art and to the modern import of that "Wordsworth-like 'speech of common men,'" the "English individualistic current in all its satirical, mystical, and naturalistic variety," that he seizes on for the redemption of his painters. But it would take more social and literary annotation than Mr. Ritchie gives, and also a more consistent aesthetic analysis, to show the full scope of this phenomenon and its value to the interpretation of painting in the last hundred years. The implicit problem is one now oppressively apparent in Ameri-

can art, in its new era of social and nationalistic prowess. The situation once present in Italy, Holland, France, and England has passed to the United States, and if Mr. Ritchie does little more than sketch it, he does that modestly and so may lead his readers to the kinds of study I have recommended above, which have become an urgent necessity among the promoters of our own pride, ambition, and general confusion in art.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

## The Mussolini Myth

*BALCONY EMPIRE: FASCIST ITALY AT WAR.* By Reynolds and Eleanor Packard. Oxford University Press. \$3.

THE authors of this book, husband and wife, correspondents for the United Press, took the place, in 1939, of another correspondent in Rome who had been expelled for sending out the rumor that Mussolini was sick. The Packards never did anything to merit expulsion. They lived in Rome in an artificial world of Fascist politicians and newspapermen and foreign correspondents, most of whom were affiliated with the Fascist propaganda machine. This was the worst possible vantage-point for anyone wishing to understand the real conditions and the state of mind of the Italian people. But the Packards were not interested in anything of this sort. They were reporters engrossed in gathering and getting out "good news" ahead of other journalists. They had no time to go back to past events or to get in touch with those Italians who do not live in Rome and who, fortunately for their intellectual and moral health, have nothing to do with newspapermen.

No wonder, therefore, that the Packards are persuaded that "history" will "certainly" divide Mussolini's dictatorship into two parts. The first part ran from the end of 1922 to the end of 1934 and "was marked by his collaboration with the democratic powers of Europe, including France and England." During these years Mussolini "did carry out a social program that was good"—"child and maternity welfare, social security for workers, housing and reclamation schemes, general improvement of sanitation, water-power projects, and agrarian reforms of all kinds." The second part began in 1934 when Mussolini planned the war with Ethiopia. "From then on he became a menace to world peace. He dropped his domestic reforms and concentrated on building up a war machine for conquest."

Had the Packards gone a little farther in their investigation they would have learned that from 1925 to 1934, no less than in the following years, Mussolini was in constant conflict with France; that he became a menace to world peace from 1934 onward, not because he became naughty just in 1934, but because Hitler had come to power in Germany and therefore Mussolini was at last in a position to join hands with somebody who could effectively challenge the rest of Europe; that Mussolini carried on the war in Ethiopia in 1935 and 1936 with the full consent of the French government and thanks to the underhanded connivance of the British government; that his intervention in Spain from 1936 to 1939 was accomplished in accordance with the British Foreign Office; and that, therefore, it is

not true that he became a menace to world peace solely when he began to disagree with the "democratic powers."

As for Mussolini's domestic reforms, they had either been enacted by the pre-Fascist regime, or were paper reforms and window dressing, or were bound to be enacted by anyone who was in power in Italy, since no government could have squandered billions of yearly revenue without doing some good in some sphere even if a great deal of evil was being done in all other spheres. Anyhow, let us thank heaven for the fact that the Packards do not rehash again the trains which run on time or the beggars that are no longer to be seen in the streets.

On the day that the news got about that Mussolini was going to declare war on the United States of America the Italian employees of the United Press "were standing around looking forlorn and lost." The headwaiter of the restaurant the Packards frequented told them: "It is terrible. It is the end of everything for Italy." "He wore the party badge himself," they continue, "yet he talked about the Fascists as though he were no part of them." At the end of the meal he offered them a bottle of champagne as "a sort of farewell present" and said, "May you return soon." When they paid the salaries of their employees, "many turned their heads away as they shook hands with us; they were embarrassed at the tears that welled in their eyes." The book swarms with evidence of kindness and friendship on the part of humble folk. But the Packards were not taken in. "Just how far could such friendliness be trusted? Certainly these people were risking their positions, even their careers to be so friendly with us. Were they thinking ahead, thinking of the day when Americans would return to Italy? No other people can be so sincerely friendly and yet make such effective use of friendliness as a means to an end." If the two Packards had spent more time with Italian peasants, fishermen, and housewives, and less with newspapermen, Italian and non-Italian, they would have drunk the champagne of the headwaiter with less suspicion.

The chapters devoted to the Ethiopian War, the Spanish War, the Greek War, and the conditions of the Italian armed forces are worth reading. The last subject in particular is handled with keen intelligence and on a basis of diligent and correct information. Had the actual state of the Italian navy, air force, and army been made known to the public outside Italy, Mussolini's bluffs would not have been as successful as they were, and many evils would have been prevented. But it took a World War to make the foreign correspondents lift some veils from the face of truth.

GAETANO SALVEMINI

## Jefferson, Citizen

*JEFFERSON HIMSELF.* Edited by Bernard Mayo. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$4.

AS THE young lady who went through Monticello ahead of me said to her mother, "Why, they never told me in school that he was an architect!" Very likely not. Though Jefferson and his house have now reached the fame required to adorn a nickel, the man's versatility and genius have remained almost secret among his compatriots. No doubt this

is an indirect sign of his continued power as a living influence: a man can still be a Jeffersonian, and it is therefore necessary to down him, usually with the remark that Jefferson never foresaw the Industrial Revolution.

In Mr. Mayo's attractively printed and illustrated volume the American reader will have a chance to discover one of his most distinguished and lovable fellow-citizens. Made up almost wholly of extracts from Jefferson's diaries, letters, and public papers, this book is at once a personal narrative, a history, and a work of philosophy. The skill and tact that have gone into making it deserve our best thanks. At times, indeed, the tact almost overshoots the mark: Jefferson's love for Mrs. Cosway was certainly such as to need no hushed introduction; and since Mr. Mayo very properly modernized spelling and punctuation, one wonders why he prints, in his own portions of the text, "Maison Quarrée at Nismes." But these are trifles. The sounder objection that one may have to snippets from great works is here overcome by the total number given, the range of subjects they deal with, the adequacy of the brief remarks introducing each group, and—on practical grounds—the impossibility of giving the public more at a first sitting. Let us hope, however, that the plan, already thirty years old, of bringing out the important writings of our great Presidents in large single volumes may be revived as the result of this present publication. As I recall, only a Washington was issued. We could do with a Jefferson, not to mention a Hamilton and a Wilson.

JACQUES BARZUN

## The Army of the Soviets

*THE RED ARMY.* By Michael Berchin and Eliahu Ben-Horin. W. W. Norton and Company. \$3.

IT IS impossible to write a really good book about the Red Army. The necessary materials are not accessible, even to high-ranking Soviet citizens. It is not surprising, therefore, that Messrs. Berchin and Ben-Horin, who are not versed in military matters anyway, have not been able to set down more than the usual collection of informational bric-a-brac. Yet the reader having even the slightest acquaintance with military life will find this book only a hazy sketch of the hard-fighting, disciplined force that astonished Hitler.

In dealing with the Red Army's relations with Soviet society as a whole, the authors are much more successful. Every army, in greater or less degree, expresses the political principles and characteristics of the society from which it is raised. If this seems to be truer of the Soviet army than of the British or American, it is because we are accustomed to our type of society and because the Soviet Union is a country in stormy transition. The successive appointments and dismissals of the entire corps of political commissars, for instance, indicate that the Russian leaders have not been, until recently, sure to what extent the contemporary political atmosphere would prove breathable to a mass army in heavy exertion. The November abolition of commissars, wrongly represented by some as evidence of a political struggle between the officers and the Communist Party, was, in reality, the consequence of the Red Army's exhibition of sound morale. Only for one brief moment and on one sector did



Russian orders of the day report retreating soldiers throwing away their arms; and that was at the very height of the German onslaught. Since that now distant month in 1941 there has not been the least sign of weakness.

Nevertheless, if the Red Army's morale must be declared sound, that is not to say that its political temper is identical with that which prevailed in the time of Lenin and Trotsky. Messrs. Berchin and Ben-Horin, who do not follow the party line but who show no bitter prejudice against the Soviet regime and its party, point to two reasons for the change. Once the Red Army was really red and not merely "beautiful," as Duranty would translate the Russian word. "But with the development of the civil war and the increase in numbers of the armed forces, the Soviet composition and the psychological make-up of the Red Army underwent a radical transformation." That is perfectly understandable. Similar transformations occurred within the Spanish Republican army during the civil war.

The authors have another explanation of the change, the conventional one now in vogue with almost every writer on the Soviet Union. When the Kremlin rulers became convinced that the world revolution was not likely to get under way for a while, they "decided that the Soviet state had to intrench itself for the time being, and, accordingly, shaped the Red Army to be the defender of the state and of the regime. The revolutionary phrases remained, but the international spirit gave way, step by step, to the spirit of nationalism." This thesis, about the only proposition which is asserted by both Kremlin diplomats and the Trotskyist opposition, seems far too simple to this reviewer, particularly when the question is raised in its military aspect. Nevertheless, the authors' discussion is extremely interesting. And since the future of the world depends upon what course the Kremlin takes, the present book is valuable enough for the help it gives on these points.

RALPH BATES

## Shakespeare Today

*SHAKESPEARE AND THE NATURE OF MAN.* By Theodore Spencer. The Macmillan Company. \$2.75.

THEODORE SPENCER has undertaken one of the most difficult of critical jobs: to present a unified and consistent picture of the Shakespearean world. If he has not entirely succeeded, it is at least partly due to the disorder and uncertainty of our thinking about Shakespeare. For there is scarcely any Shakespearean criticism these days, in the way of contemporary revaluation. Nor do we have a precise *idea* of him, as we do of practically every other large figure. The fact is that he is no longer a part of our literary imagination; hence we do not feel the critical compulsion of certain periods in the eighteenth and nineteenth century to renew the Shakespearean image. Instead, he has been largely appropriated by the graduate schools and put through the mill of research. But while this new genre of literary detection has immensely increased our textual and biographical information, at the same time its making a fetish of fact and its lack of historical and literary bearings has almost hopelessly fragmented our entire approach to the Shakespearean problem.

Spencer's feat is to have organized the dangling parts of Shakespearean scholarship into an interpretative scheme that ostensibly reveals the underlying values and beliefs of the plays. Briefly summarized, his thesis is that Shakespeare was a writer of the transition from the medieval to the modern and that he gave dramatic form to the deep-seated conflict between the traditionally optimistic, orderly conception of the universe and the new mood of pessimism and skepticism. And Spencer's approach, basically an examination of the more striking correspondences between the theoretical life of the time and the actual content of the plays, helps to define the cultural conventions at Shakespeare's disposal. There are also some remarkable insights into the sources of Shakespeare's leading ideas. But the trouble with Spencer's description of Shakespeare's intellectual background is that it is at once too literal and too general. It is too literal in that it is couched in terms that are more applicable to the cosmological concern with good and evil of minds like Hooker and Donne, and could at best be used to explain only the marginal meanings in Shakespeare; it is too general in that by taking in almost every Renaissance figure it fails to account for the secular and naturalist accent peculiar to Shakespeare.

As a result, Spencer's reading of the plays—especially the tragedies, which he regards as the consummation of Shakespeare's philosophy—is largely deductive and analogical, as he tries to fit them into the cultural abstractions of the Renaissance. In Spencer's version the tragedies reenact the clash between order and chaos, good and evil, appearance and reality. Spencer argues the case with some textual plausibility, but, obviously, the drives and entanglements of the leading characters go far beyond these simple antitheses. True enough, Iago is, as Spencer asserts, a personification of evil concealed behind a benign appearance; but how explain his compulsive ambition, which is rationalized—it is patently not fulfilled—through his destruction of Othello? Nor can Lear's worldly madness, which to my mind is an expression—or symbol—of his inability to understand his predicament, be reduced to the dry schematism of harmony and disorder. Spencer's analysis really provides no clue to the distinctive features of the Shakespearean hero, who brought into literature a peculiarly modern pride of ego; self-dramatizing and monstrously self-conscious, driven by a kind of obsessive energy, he constantly strains his personality in the effort to hold on to its reality.

As Eliot once remarked, Shakespeare's portrait has been retouched each time he has been brought up to date: for example, there is the rough-and-ready genius presented by Johnson, the Faustian soul-searcher of Goethe, the imaginative sage of Coleridge, the demonic spirit of Wyndham Lewis. Lately, however, there has been a tendency, in the more formal scholarly studies, to present Shakespeare as a virtuoso. Something of this tendency has crept into Spencer's re-creation, in which Shakespeare appears as a sort of eclectic genius, who was fixed within the bias of his time, but whose extraordinary powers are to be explained mainly by his grasp on what Spencer calls the universals of human existence, that is on life, struggle, death, the relation of man to nature, society, and heaven. And in Spencer's attribution of an "affirmative" and highly moral vision of life to Shakespeare,

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January 23, 1943

there emerges an essentially conservative, almost religious figure, intent on preserving harmony and proportion in man's inner being as well as in the world at large. Thus conceived, Shakespeare becomes a secular theologian of the good life—bearing a striking resemblance to those literary men of today who would replace the faith of the past with the fashionable image of "tradition."

WILLIAM PHILLIPS

## Fiction in Review

TO DISPEL some of the mystery that surrounds the life of Italians in America, two new books have appeared in these last weeks—"Maria," by Michael De Capite (John Day Company, \$2.50), and "Mount Allegro," by Jerre Mangione (Houghton Mifflin Company, \$2.50). With the exception of the Negroes, probably no large minority in the United States has received so little serious attention in fiction or been so stereotyped in popular art as the Italians. If this is a situation in which the Italian Americans themselves are not without responsibility (after all, despite their numbers, they have produced very few writers and artists), here are two books which should help explain why they are such peculiarly easy victims of ignorance and condescension.

Both books are first novels, both are written by young men born here of Italian parents, and both make it pretty clear that the Italians, of all the foreign-language groups in this country, are probably the most resistant to absorption into a new culture. Although the people in "Maria" and in "Mount Allegro" live in large American industrial cities, they are aware of the life around them only to fear it. They huddle together in their Little Italys, clinging to their native land by every means at their command—language, food, religion, social and family ties. They left Italy in most instances because of poverty, but the slightly better livings they earn over here seem small compensation for the fields and the olive trees and sunlight to which they dream of returning. Even their gregariousness doesn't tempt them beyond their own family groups. When Mr. De Capite reports that in 1914 his Little Italy learned that war had broken out in the old country only when a fire attracted sightseers from "outside," we begin to grasp the problem of Italian American assimilation.

But apart from their parallel backgrounds Mr. De Capite's and Mr. Mangione's novels have few points of similarity. "Mount Allegro" is not even strictly a novel, but a well-ordered series of recollections of Mr. Mangione's Sicilian childhood in Rochester—lively, witty, easy in the manner of the *New Yorker*, a kind of Italian "Life with Father." Mr. Mangione has traveled a long distance in the course of his self-education; at moments he may appear to be a bit uncertain whether he is any the better for having reached the place, now, where he can poke even such serious and tender fun at his past, but this is a self-consciousness he shares with most of the first-person writers for the *New Yorker* and has little to do with the fact that he is an Italian: the reminiscence form, with its substitution of tolerance for passion, has a way of betraying both author and subject. Mr. De Capite's "Maria," on the other hand, although full of expressed feeling, is fairly dull compared to "Mount Allegro"; passion without personality turns out to be less good reading

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## Mid-Winter Books

The Nation will publish its regular Mid-Winter Book Number on Feb. 27. Advertising space reservations must be placed by Tues., Feb. 16; copy appearing well forward must be OK'd by Thurs. night, Feb. 18; final deadline for copy OK's is Friday night, Feb. 19. To avoid delays, make your space reservation now.

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than personality without passion. The heroine of his title is an American-born Italian girl who at sixteen marries the man her parents choose for her. Maria's detailed history, through two marriages, motherhood, and up to the brink of old age, is Mr. De Capite's dual indictment of the Old World culture that formed her and the New World culture in which Maria has such difficulty making her way.

The America of MacKinlay Kantor's novelette "Happy Land" (Coward-McCann, \$1.25) bears very little resemblance to the America of Mr. De Capite or Mr. Mangione. Rusty Marsh, a "typical" small-town boy, has been killed in the Pacific, and to comfort his father by showing him that where there is something to live for there is something to die for, Rusty's grandfather rises from his own veteran's grave to reconstruct the boy's life. It is a charming life, but in the opinion of at least one reader too overwhelmingly on the side of high-mindedness for credibility; the men fighting in the Pacific are heroic but they are also human. We at home ought certainly to be able to draw fortitude from stronger stuff than this.

Of the latest, the fourth, volume of Upton Sinclair's fictionalized history of the modern world, "Wide Is the Gate" (The Viking Press, \$3), it should be noted for the record that Mr. Sinclair has currently completed the period between 1934 and 1937 and that Lanny Budd, that wonder boy of ubiquity, is still as much at home with Hitler and Göring ("Ja, Lanny!" he is greeted by Göring) as he is with the depressed masses of Germany and Spain. If you can swallow Mr. Sinclair's non-dimensional characterizations and not be too much thrown off by the naivete with which he describes

the world of wealth and power—in his innocent way he really leers, like a socialist small boy watching a capitalist strip-tease—"Wide Is the Gate" is an easy way to refresh your knowledge of events not very distant from memory.

DIANA TRILLING

## Sassoon's War

*THE WEALD OF YOUTH.* By Siegfried Sassoon. The Viking Press. \$2.75.

THE fate of Siegfried Sassoon presents something embarrassingly like an object lesson to the contemporary poet, for in his work I see displayed the moral that, at the risk of losing his intellectual head, the poet should always remain at a remove from the subject of his poems. I do not mean that the poet must necessarily inhabit either a glass case or an ivied tower or the mantel shelf: I merely mean that the poet who has too large and too sharp an ax to grind usually finishes up by cutting his own throat with it. (The discomfort of such an operation constitutes perhaps its most moral characteristic.)

Siegfried Sassoon has a war on his conscience. He has it, if I may say so without levity, buzzing in his bonnet, skeleton in his cupboards, displayed on all his sleeves, and both between and upon every admirably written line of his memoirs and his poems. How it happens that Sassoon should have succeeded in arrogating to himself so great a sense of guilt I find explained in the demonstrable fact that he is a poet; and poets, along with criminals, seem to suffer more than most from this consciousness of impersonal responsibility. But only so long as this sense of guilt functions under the jurisdiction of the poem does it remain sane. For when the poem functions under the jurisdiction of the sense of guilt, then it is propaganda and not poems that result. This, as I see it, indicates the difference between Hopkins, who, fanatic as he was, remained ashamed of the domination of the poem over the responsibility, and, say, Rudyard Kipling, for whom the responsibility always dominated the poem. It was the pity and not the wrongness of war that moved the greatest poet of the First World War. It is the wrongness of it that has turned too many of Sassoon's poems into a tremendous roll of logs.

Here, however, in "The Weald of Youth," where Sassoon rather applauds peace than condemns war, where he merely remembers his own youth, I see all his curiously posthumous dignity exemplified. The book simply describes Sassoon's somewhat rustic life until the day in August, 1914, when everyone's death suddenly became possible. He speaks with great charm and grace of such matters as a bicycle ride to Rye, a horse race almost won, the publication of his first collection of verses, his meeting with the slightly supercilious Apollo Belvedere in gray slacks who turned out to be Rupert Brooke, and his part in a village cricket match. And all this is observed, as through St. Paul's glass darkly, through the never-to-be-mentioned melancholy of the war that ended it all. I have called this book posthumous, because clearly someone died. I think of Sassoon as the poet who spent twenty years decapitating himself with an idealistic battle-ax.

GEORGE BARKER

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## IS MAJORITY RULE A SOUND PRINCIPLE OF GOVERNMENT?

Wm. Crocker

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## IN BRIEF

**THE JERVIS BAY AND OTHER POEMS.** By Lieutenant Michael Thwaites, R.N.V.R. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.75.

The title poem in this collection is good rousing narrative, says Stephen Vincent Benét. It is, except in the passages where the vocabulary becomes literary and symbolical instead of nautical and direct; but there are too many such passages. The Newdigate Prize poem, *Milton Blind*, which concludes the book, is an excellent specimen of the kind of work for which admiring dons give prizes. In between are half a dozen, more or less, really lovely lyrics—*The Tunnel*, *Coming into the Clyde*, *The Tactician*, *Air and Water*, *The Well*. The perils of steering a true poetic course may be somewhat abated if Lieutenant Thwaites can manage to use these lyrics as navigating stars; but it will be a difficult voyage.

**VAN LOON'S LIVES.** By Hendrik Willem van Loon. Simon and Schuster. \$3.95.

In order to tell the life stories of certain historical characters, from Erasmus to Thomas Jefferson, from Confucius to Queen Elizabeth, and many more, Mr. Van Loon had the pleasant idea of describing a series of mythical dinner parties at his native town of Veere in Holland. Illustrated in his own pleasing style and embroidered with a full account of some uncommonly good menus with the accompanying music, the book is interesting enough to read if taken intermittently. But why go to the trouble of bringing back to life Descartes and Emerson, say, or Emily Dickinson and Chopin, only to have them talk like Mr. Van Loon himself?

**THE ENJOYMENT OF ART IN AMERICA.** A Survey of the Permanent Collections of Painting, Sculpture, Ceramics, and Decorative Arts in American and Canadian Museums. By Regina Shoolman and Charles E. Slatkin. J. B. Lippincott Company. \$10.

This is a historical and descriptive account of art through the ages rather than a catalogue of the collections in American museums. The many illustrations, however, are of works housed permanently in this country. From these the reader gets an idea of the enormous artistic wealth produced by other peoples which is now in our institutional

hands. This country, apparently, became imperialist in art long before it became so in anything else. The book is magnificently produced and belongs in every reference library for the sake of its plates alone.

**ANTHOLOGY OF NORWEGIAN LYRICS.** Translated by Charles Wharton Stork. With an Introduction by C. J. Hambro. Princeton University Press for American-Scandinavian Foundation. \$2.75.

Mr. Hambro gives a succinct and clear account of Norwegian poetry from Welhaven (1807-1873) and Wergeland (1808-1845) to contemporaries who have written poems of Norway under the Nazi invasion. Mr. Hambro is high in his praise for the translator, Dr. Charles Wharton Stork. "Every single poem is rendered in English in a form identical with the original; the rhythm and the meter, the grouping of rhymes, the distribution of masculine and feminine rhymes correspond exactly to the Norwegian text." Unfortunately, a man can do all this and still not be a good translator: the reader who has only the vaguest ideas of the quality of Norwegian verse will do some uneasy wondering, one suspects, as to whether the originals are quite as prettily versy as Dr. Stork makes them sound. Even if it runs up the cost, the originals should be printed, in this kind of collection, on the facing pages; the method is hard on the reader, and harder on the translator, but in the long run fairer to the original.

## FILMS

**WILLIAM DIETERLE** is to be respected as a man who obviously wants to make fine moving pictures, and to use them for serious teaching. It would be a pleasure to say better of him, but that is at best a pleasure deferred. "Tennessee Johnson" is another of those screen biographies for which thousands of cultivated people will lay aside "Jalna" for an evening because they like to feel benevolent toward a really good movie. It is as sincere as Henry Wallace, whom it is perhaps pre-nominating, and now and then, helped usually by Van Heflin, the sincerity breaks loose from its male nurses and becomes vigorous and warming for a minute or two. Lionel Barrymore, too, is sometimes better than you could think possible after all these years of grunting to stay awake under the boredom of his assignments. The rest is Dieterle's cus-

tomary high-minded, high-polished mélange of heavy "touches" and "intelligent" performances. Within the limits of its nearsighted traditions it does its very best; but anyone who wants a measure for the inadequacy of that should watch Morris Ankrum, as Jefferson Davis, announcing the secession of Mississippi.

It is unimportant whether Ankrum is perfect, or anywhere near it. The important thing is that he works in a world apart from the rest of the company; a world where good historical films have a chance to exist. He looks like a daguerreotype, not an impersonation. He bears himself like a man of 1860, not like a studious actor in a costume picture. He talks like a half-crazy devil. He supplies, in fact, the two primal requirements of the camera, in whose neglect or dilution you might better not use a camera at all: living—rather than imitative—visual, aural, and psychological authenticity, and the paralyzing electric energy of the present tense as against the rest of the show's glossy, comfortably researched reenactment at eighty years' remove.

Perhaps it is unkind to knock a picture for its neglect of problems which never occurred to its makers, and which are habitually neglected throughout an industry; but I cannot feel it is irrelevant. Here by some accident is this actor, dead right in every essential, showing up the bumbling of the rest. If all that he means had been realized, and studied, the following suggestions would be unnecessary.

Since Americans of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries differ in face, bearing, speech, and spirit as deeply as the men of different races, scour the country for the atavisms and actors who can at least suggest the difference, and preserve us from any more of these affable masquerades.

The historical events or inventions must look like newsreels made under ideal conditions, or poor ones if that edges the illusion of veracity.

The "private-life" scenes must attempt a related kind of realism which so far has only been dabbled at, stagily, in Lubitsch's earliest films, and innocently, through transcendent chromos, in "The Birth of a Nation."

If you can give this realism poetic clarity without blurring its naturalistic clarity, you will have the beginnings, at least, of a good historical film, instead of a Drinkwater play.

All this detail will be as dead weight as its neglect is unless it is given pres-



ent-tense immediacy rather than the customary optative pluperfect. The use of orthochromatic film will at least help toward this; whereas the seed-pearl shine which is so rarely appropriate to romance, irony, and special atmosphere, and which possesses even newsreels today, will drown in fatuousness every other care you take.

In this film, instead, where the common people are intended to mean so much, the one faintly convincing rural face is Heflin's when he briefly recalls Barthelmess in the first production of "Tol'able David." Much more nearly typical is a bit by a supposed country boy who has a city face and body and a new straw hat which is scissored into a calendar reminiscence of a Whittier poem.

Those who think that I am quibbling over detail instead of deploring an ignorance of basic obligations should logically think the same if I objected to a performance of a Mozart quartet on a bass ocharina, a kazoo, and a team of Hickman whistles, or pointed out inadequacies in a production of "Coriolanus" which was staged by a particularly art-minded group of fox terriers.

I have given perhaps exorbitant space to "Tennessee Johnson" because it furnishes, for many, the illusion that Hollywood is "coming of age," and because a lifetime subscription to the *Atlantic Monthly* does not seem to me synonymous with "coming of age." In the little space left, a few regrets and recommendations.

Hitchcock's "Shadow of a Doubt" is a much better and more interesting picture, with some real attention to what places and people really look like, in Santa Rosa and in New Jersey, some very good (and some fussy) photography by Joseph Valentine, and some clever observation of rabbitly white-collar life which, in spite of a specious sweetness, is the best since W. C. Fields's "It's a Gift."

"The Commandos Strike at Dawn" will remind you why John Farrow won the Critics' Award for direction with "Wake Island." It is "mature," for Paul Muni begins as a meteorologist widower and ends as a corpse. It glorifies the common man, for Muni says, "We Norwegians are a sturdy folk." Its climax is a commando raid in which no point is made of the likelihood that every trick of fighting has its countertrick and that the enemy, having boned up on them, may not be entirely cooperative. The raid is done in what currently passes for montage, so freely used in "Wake

Island." It has about the relation to Eisenstein's montage that a whickering prose, punctuated entirely by dashes, has to good poetry. Lillian Gish, formal and archaic though she is, shows how far pictures have degenerated since her time.

"Journey for Margaret" contains a few poignant flashes on children and parental emotion, some writing ("I'm mad at 1940," etc., etc.) as awful as the people who talk like that, and a well-meant performance by Fay Bainter which suggests that if Anna Freud—whom she is supposed to echo—really treats children like that, they were far better left shocked in the bomb-rubble than deshocked in her clinic. Those who want to see evil, cruelty, and some archetypal national diseases should see "The Powers Girl" and two out of three other musicals; few other films manage, even inadvertently, to get down so much. The subject here is American bitchery, with a demon photographer and his insurance-ad Mom and Pop thrown in, and some overloaded music from Benny Goodman, who should have refused to take off his glasses.

The best recent war short is "Conquer by the Clock." It develops some questionable emotion over a munitions girl who, through sneaking time for a cigarette in the ladies' room, sends a dead cartridge to a soldier and the soldier to his death. It fails to suggest that the same thing might have happened if her visit to the toilet had been sincere; but like "Private Smith of the U. S. A." it shows that when Slavko Vorkapich can keep his hands off a fancy transition (he still cannot) he is one of the straightest and most sharp-eyed men in Hollywood.

JAMES AGEE

## ART

AMERICAN SCULPTURE OF OUR TIME: GROUP SHOW. At the Buchholz and Willard Galleries, until January 23.

THERE has been a renaissance of sculpture in this century. How much of one becomes evident when you try to recall the names of outstanding sculptors between Houdon and Rodin. Thorwaldsen? Barye? Rising industrial capitalism, with its concern with distances, energies, and dreams, found sculpture too literal a medium in which to express itself well. Rodin, finally, managed to put into stone something of the nineteenth cen-

tury that had been expressed by others in poetry, painting, and music, but in doing so he dissolved the Renaissance tradition of sculpture. It is mainly the work of painters—Cézanne, Renoir, and even Seurat and Van Gogh—that has made sculpture once more possible as a great form. In our time there have been Maillol, Despiau, Lehmbruck, Brancusi, Lipchitz, Laurens, and others; the occasional sculpture of painters such as Renoir, Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Gris, and Masson; and the production of the constructivists and their similars—Pevsner, Gabo, Vantongerloo, Giacometti, Gonzales, and Arp. Significantly, these last derive their antecedents from painting rather than sculpture, and their work, except for Arp's, is more pictorial than sculptural in its effect.

The renaissance has reached our country. In the twentieth century we have had for the first time two professional American sculptors worth mentioning, Flannagan and Lachaise, and the constructor or fabricator, Calder. Now there is David Smith, whose work puts in the shade almost everything else at the Buchholz and Willard exhibition. Not that many of the other sculptors and the examples of their art are not well chosen. A small bronze nude by Lachaise is the best I have seen in his bulbous style, the distortions of which usually seem gratuitous; there are also two good bird themes of Flannagan's, an excellently compact stone ram by Heinz Warnecke, heads by Burlingame and Laurent, a fine Calder mobile, a wooden lady by Steig, and even a heroic stone head by William Zorach that is not quite so pompously inflated as most of his work. Peter Grippe, using cubism in a way that does not remind one of the cubist sculpture of painters, and adding a bit of Picasso's latest style of decomposition, has hold of an idea which he has not yet succeeded in embodying in his terra cotta.

All this shows the comparatively high level sculpture has reached since the nineteenth century—leaving aside the hideous expressionistic, "functional," and stylized statuary of which only contemporary sculpture is capable, and of which there are enough samples present. Yet of the better work none comes close enough to great art. None except David Smith's "Interior." Smith, who, fittingly, is more smith than carver or modeler, has welded and molded rods of steel and bronze into a sort of horizontal cage figuring the skeleton of the

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organism which is the family, and whose corporeal identity is the house. Molded into the framework and given by the merest resemblances are a key, a wall picture, a reclining female, and other domestic items. Smith shows for almost the first time that a house can be a proper subject for sculpture in the round. However, the work does not stand on its symbolism but on its formal energy, for which the symbolism is only a springboard. One's eyes are led along the rods without a misstep; the divisions of empty space within them have a life of their own and develop and change like chords in music; and the rust on the metal adds the right final touch.

It is obvious that Smith aims at effects closer to drawing than to sculpture. He employs the "metaphysics" of line to direct and connect across intervals of space; the essentially sculptural, on the other hand, presents itself with more solidity, its form rise from a central mass and are related to each other by it, with the sense of possible touch and weight brought into play. (See G. L. K. Morris's interesting article on the connections between sculpture and painting in the current *Partisan Review*.) But Smith's linear style is perhaps closer to the nature of metal itself as we feel it today, for metal has become pliable under the welder's tools as it never was for those who could shape it only by casting and hammering.

Smith is thirty-six. If he is able to maintain the level set in the work he has already done—of which other fine examples may be seen in the back room of the Willard Gallery—he has a chance of becoming one of the greatest of all American artists.

CLEMENT GREENBERG

## MUSIC

THREE years of daily reviewing for a newspaper enable me to luxuriate in the blessedness of being able to stay away from orchestral concerts and solo recitals by the dozens, and to attend the few that give some promise of being worth hearing and writing about. Thus my interest in Mozart and in Szigeti caused me to attend all five of Szigeti's Mozart sonata recitals in the Y. M. H. A., the first of which I discussed a few weeks ago. Although some of the works that I heard for the first time turned out to be quite dull there were two, the superbly dramatic K. 379 and the fine K. 306, that were exciting

discoveries; and as it happened each provided an occasion for the great playing—great, for one thing, in the power of its wonderfully inflected and sustained large-spanned phrasing—that one can expect to hear from Szigeti sometime during a recital, when after achieving mental equilibrium he functions at the highest point of communicative intensity. For those great moments I willingly endure the scratchy, wiry sounds he is likely to produce in the opening work of the program, when he is not yet at ease, or the fussy or distorted phrasing he may indulge in later on; whereas for no amount of Heifetz's dazzling perfection of sound and technique would I listen to what he makes of Mozart—or, for that matter, of Beethoven or Bach or Schubert (the simplicity of his phrasing in the recorded performance of Schubert's Trio Op. 99 is exceptional; and I am inclined to ascribe it to the influence of Feuermann). I should add that I would have got even more pleasure from the performances if Szigeti's partner had been a pianist and musician of a stature commensurate with his own, or at least without the deficiencies and mannerisms that one was increasingly aware of in Andor Foldes's playing.

Koussevitzky being the great conductor and the considerably less than great musician that he is, I go to one of his concerts only infrequently, to hear a new work which interests me, or to hear the almost unbelievable playing he gets his orchestra to do in the music of twentieth-century French and Russian composers that he does understand well—to hear those performances of Prokofiev's "Classical Symphony," Debussy's "Nuages" and "Fêtes" and "Après-midi d'un faune," and Ravel's "Daphnis and Chloë" that are among the wonders of the age. The January concert in Carnegie Hall that I attended began with Corelli's Sarabande, Gigue, and Badinerie, in which one heard the fabulously beautiful sound and finish of the Boston Symphony strings, and also the excessive vehemence of Koussevitzky's treatment of what he evidently thought of as the "climax" of the Sarabande (I could imagine the plastic continuity of the passage as Toscanini would have played it). Then came Martinu's new Symphony, which enabled one to hear the even more astounding sound and finish of the entire orchestra, and which Koussevitzky performed very effectively. The effect, however, was only that of a pleasantly inconsequential, if gorgeously orchestrated work, produced by

a man whose musical feeling seemed to have translated itself into obsessive ostinato rhythms, mostly in three-quarter time, that he had managed to keep going until he had the four movements of a symphony.

Berlioz's "King Lear" Overture got me into Carnegie Hall for a performance by Mitropoulos with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. The work is, as Tovey put it, "a magnificent piece of rhetoric in tragic style"; it is, moreover, an early piece, in which nevertheless the Berlioz ways of thinking—melodic, harmonic, orchestral—are already present, lacking the richness and sureness and subtlety of their maturity in later works, but astonishing and exciting even in their youthful sprawling vigor. On Christmas Day, on the other hand, C. B. S. broadcast Bernard Herrman's performance of a few passages of "L'Enfance du Christ," one of Berlioz's last works, which W. J. Turner said was his best. Having heard only a few passages, and these few broadcast in a way that caused the orchestra to be blanketed by the voices, I am not in a position to have any strong conviction about the work; but I will mention the impression I got from much of what I heard—that the Berlioz ways of thinking were operating with the expertness of age where poetic impulse was no longer effectual.

As for the Metropolitan Opera Association, I have not yet heard any of its productions, but hope to be able to report on them soon. Meanwhile, I have been interested by the Metropolitan's announcement that Friedrich Schorr, who had wished to retire, had been persuaded to stay for at least one performance with which the Metropolitan would bid farewell to an artist who had given it distinguished service for many years. I have, that is, been struck by this gracious acknowledgment of a debt to one artist, and the failure to make such acknowledgment to another artist who deserves it no less. For many years the exquisite voice and musicianship of Elisabeth Rethberg constituted one of the Metropolitan's most valuable artistic and financial assets; recently Mme Rethberg, whose singing used to be effortless, has got herself into difficulties of voice-production that have made her short of breath and unable to stay on pitch; and at the beginning of this season the Metropolitan announced her "resignation" without as much as a verbal statement of its indebtedness to her for her long and distinguished service.

B. H. HAGGIN



# Letters to the Editors

## Booth, Beveridge, and the Work-Shy

Dear Sirs: Editorial reference to the Beveridge report in a recent issue of *The Nation* prompts me, a visitor to the United States at the present time, to submit to you some observations on a subject to which I have devoted considerable time and attention in the past fifty years.

1. You rightly say that the foundations on which the Beveridge report rests were laid over thirty years ago. I believe they were laid in Charles Booth's "Life and Labor of the People of London" (1889-1903), and in the later published accounts of researches made by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, particularly their "Break-up of the British Poor Law." I know that Sir William Beveridge has built on these, and that they have provided the bricks and mortar to which you refer as being used by various British governments for building a new social structure.

2. Nearly fifty years ago, when the Asquith government at the behest of the Webbs established labor exchanges, my friend Beveridge was known to his London familiars as "Fluidity of Labor Beveridge." I recall this because at a meeting of the Economic Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, shortly before the outbreak of war, Sir William Beveridge expressed his personal opinion, in answer to a question I put, that the result of the labor exchanges and the social services built around them had been to render some classes of labor less mobile than they had been in other days.

3. I have not yet had an opportunity of studying the full text of the report, but when you refer to the "impending final overthrow of the Poor Law system" I venture to predict that when all is said and done, there will remain a hard core of defiant, intransigent human creatures. Although the "won't work" have now been largely eliminated in England, the "work-shy" persist. Note in passing that the able-bodied Scot until after the last war did not have the legal right to food and shelter if he were destitute that was acquired by the Englishman by an Act of Parliament passed in Queen Elizabeth's reign, and around which the whole of the British social amenities have been built. In re-

cent years this right has been translated into the right to work. This right, in one form or another, will probably survive the "final overthrow." Some day the courts will have to be asked for a ruling as to whether a man will be required to take work one, two, three, or any given number of miles away from his home. At present the man is the sole arbiter.

4. Despite all the mechanics of progressive social legislation the human problem will persist, and spiritual considerations alone will suffice for the "won't work" and the "work shy." In saying this I do not forget that even the Salvation Army some forty years ago promoted a bill in the British Parliament to establish labor colonies with powers for the compulsory detention of the residuum of human derelicts whom they found slipping through their hands in their various social activities. The principle of this bill was approved by an interdepartmental government committee, and the bill got its first reading, but liberal (?) opinion, seeing an infringement of the liberty of the subject, saw to it that the bill got no farther, and vagrants—sources of moral and physical contagion—were left free to roam at will.

DAVID C. LAMB,

Commissioner of the Salvation Army  
Detroit, Mich., January 15

[We agree that "the right to work" will survive the enactment into law of the Beveridge proposals; in fact, we see it as the moral basis for whatever degree of government intervention is necessary to insure a high level of employment, failing which the "abolition of want" can hardly be achieved. Commissioner Lamb, however, seems to be concerned about the right not to work and suggests that new steps will have to be taken to deal with the voluntary unemployment which the Beveridge scale of payments might seem to make too attractive. But he will not deny, we are sure, that the last thirty years, during which Britain's social services have been steadily enlarged and increasing efforts have been made to prevent unemployment from resulting in utter destitution, have seen a steady decline in unemployment and vagrancy. Some bums no doubt are born but most of them are made—by ill-health, by maladjustments in childhood, by the de-

moralization occasioned by prolonged unemployment. The Beveridge proposals attempt to deal with some of these causes, and the effect of their enactment would undoubtedly be to diminish still further "the residuum of human derelicts." No doubt a few natural bums, recruited from all classes, would continue as eyesores on the social landscape. But an economically healthy society should be proof against their contagion, and we ourselves could bear an occasional pan-handler better than the sight of the most humanely administered concentration camp.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

## The Hindu-Moslem Chasm

Dear Sirs: In *The Nation* of January 2 Reinhold Niebuhr, reviewing Shridharani's "Warning to the West," says that "the deep chasm between Hindu and Moslem is racial as well as cultural and religious." Deep or not (and here the real question would be, Who wants to deepen it?) that chasm is not racial. Jawaharlal Nehru told me that 95 per cent of India's Moslems are former Hindus converted to Islam by the Mohammedan conquerors of India. Mr. Jinnah, the president of the Moslem League of India, told me that 75 per cent of India's Moslems are converted Hindus. So the chasm is not racial.

I find it very indicative of a certain war-time type of American liberalism that Dr. Niebuhr contrives to write a long review of a book on India by an Indian nationalist without once mentioning the evils and mistakes of British imperialism, to which the bulk of the book is devoted. LOUIS FISCHER  
New York, January 11

## Oriental Self-Righteousness

Dear Sirs: I should like to remind Mr. Fischer that Shridharani's book in both title and content is primarily an indictment of Western arrogance toward the Orient and deals only secondarily with British imperialism, as a part of a general Western policy. I chose to accept the indictment as essentially true and to devote some of my limited space to a refutation of what seems to me a dangerous illusion—the idea that ethnic friction is caused purely by the white man's shortcomings.



January 23, 1943

Mr. Fischer quotes Nehru and Jinnah in order to disprove my contention that religio-cultural tensions in India are "racial as well as religious." According to Nehru, the racial element amounts to only 5 per cent and according to Jinnah to only 25 per cent. Suppose we split the difference and say that it is 15 per cent. That fact hardly supports Mr. Fischer's conclusion: "So the chasm is not racial." Does the fact that the tension between Belfast and Dublin is primarily religious disprove the contributory element of racial friction between Scotch and Irish?

Mr. Fischer and I are in essential agreement upon the main question. But he tends to bow in unqualified contrition before the Oriental indictment of the Occident, and I think it important to refute the compensatory self-righteousness of the Orient because it is a source of political confusion.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

New York, January 14

### Security for Jews

*Dear Sirs:* In your editorial *Murder of a People* (December 19) after discussing various proposals for counteracting the scientific murder of millions of Jews, and after suggesting, among other things, threats of retribution and protests to be relayed to Berlin via Franco and the Vatican, you conclude that "it is unlikely that any of these measures would make the slightest difference to the Germans." And let me add that they would not make the slightest difference to the two million Jews who already have been sacrificed on the altar of international fascism or to the millions more who face the same fate.

You, no doubt, realize that this process of extermination is not a new atrocity invented by the Nazis but rather the culmination of a 2,000-year-old recurring crime of civilization against the Jewish people. Surely the world owes it to its most frequent martyrs to admit the inadequacy of stop-gap and piecemeal solutions of the Jewish problem. If we are helpless to stop the current blood-bath we must certainly take the steps necessary to prevent its recurrence.

Will the democracies attempt to solve the Jewish problem by creating for the Jewish nation new havens and new asylums and thus relegate it to eternal minority status, with all the woe and suffering appertaining thereto? Or will the world finally admit that the only realistic and abiding solution for Jewish homelessness lies in mass immigration

into Palestine and the reestablishment of that country as the national Jewish Homeland?

How long can the United Nations deny to the Jewish people their divine and historical right to take their rightful place in the family of nations? How long can the United Nations deny to the Jewish people the elementary right of self-defense through the creation of a Jewish army for Palestinian and stateless Jews? How long can the United Nations deny to the Jewish people the right to rebuild their own thousands of *Lidices* on their own soil?

Let us, liberals and democrats, who were so shocked by this "murder of a people" band together *today* and not "on the day of liberation," not only for joint expression of horror and sympathy, not only to demand retribution for the Nazi murderers, but for the speedy realization of this only positive solution. Let us see that Jews obtain "the peace and security which they have gone through hell to merit" by establishing the long overdue National Jewish Homeland and admitting it to the ranks of the United Nations.

LEONARD ROSENFELD

New York, January 4

### Join Up, Radio!

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is only roughly covered by the regular announcers, newscasters, and special speakers. Conservation, war economy, defense measures, health programs, morale building, and so on, cannot be too fully explained or too frequently stressed. New problems arise each day.

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American radio, get aboard!

DALE WARREN

Boston, Mass., January 16

### Myron Taylor, Episcopalian

*Dear Sirs:* Your correspondent, Dolph Swenson, may be quite right that there is a mysterious influence being exerted on the State Department by the Roman Catholic church, but it is only fair to point out that Myron Taylor is not a member of that church and that Mr. Swenson's implication that he may be carrying out "the wishes of the spiritual head of his church" is based on misinformation. Mr. Taylor is and has been a prominent and useful member of the Protestant Episcopal church and is a communicant in good standing of St. Bartholomew's Church, New York City.

JOHN MCGILL KRUMM

New Haven, Conn., January 15

### Prejudice or Fear?

*Dear Sirs:* I have been a resident of the South for seven months, and I object strongly to any representation of anti-Negro prejudice as an expression of the white man's struggle for survival. That is specious "reasoning." We are creating deplorable conditions and then blaming the colored man for becoming the victim. In the same way we are making an education difficult for him to obtain and then accusing him of being stupid and ignorant.

I hear constantly the statement that the Negro is innately inferior to the white, and so he doesn't deserve anything better. Is the superior white man afraid of the inferior Negro? Is that

why the whites won't let the colored establish a USO at Camp Tyson? An anticipated 4,000 Negro soldiers have no place to go for something to eat or to spend their leisure time. But these troops will become objects of vicious criticism when trouble breaks out.

H. C. HART

Nashville, Tenn., January 14

## Progressive Teacher Speaks

*Dear Sirs:* The accent of despair in the article *Violence in the Classroom* by Agnes E. Benedict, in your issue of January 9, seems to me unworthy of the author of "Progress to Freedom." Do not the forces of war place all that we call civilization "in imminent danger"?

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## MEETING

### A Dinner-Forum

## INDIA'S PLACE IN THE DEMOCRATIC WORLD

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It is certain progressive education will come into its own in winning the peace. Most liberal teachers do not broadcast their plans and progress, but it does not follow that they "cherish the comfortable illusion that all is well with our schools." There are, of course, many defeats as grievous as the New York cases mentioned in the article, but the progressive American teacher, like our armed forces, is "hell-bent" for victory over "an authoritarian approach, regimented pupils, and a formal and bookish curriculum." R. L. M.

Chicago, Ill., January 19

## One Woman's Meat

*Dear Sirs:* I hope you will feel it worth while to stop in the midst of your morning mail long enough to read what a friend of mine has to say about *The Nation*. It has been my custom to send her my copy as soon as I have read it. Speaking of a plan whereby she might receive the paper in another way, she says: "Don't stop *The Nation* till you hear I am launched on the new plan, for that little paper is my meat and drink. It's astonishing how little one can get from other sources that doesn't appear sooner or later, at least in brief, in *The Nation*. That fact helps to reconcile me to the severe curtailment of my reading." MARY R. LAKEMAN

Rochester, N. Y., January 15

## Praise Preferred

*Dear Sirs:* I quote from your opening editorial note in your December 26 number commenting on Mr. Henderson's resignation:

But it is probably fair to say that no one could have succeeded at this task in the face of constant sniping from a section of the press more interested in discrediting the New Deal than in winning the war.

Substitute President Roosevelt for Mr. Henderson in this statement, and your journal for the "section of the press," and you have a very true picture of what you are doing. You, of course, are not trying to discredit the New Deal, but you do seem more interested in vindicating your own pet theories than in winning the war. At least, I do not now recall a single strong, affirmative paragraph from any of your editorial force in the past four or five weeks in approval of the President and his acts. Anybody can find fault—suppose you try the other course.

FRANK C. REED

Pasadena, Cal., January 5

## CONTRIBUTORS

IRA WOLFERT was correspondent for the North American Newspaper Alliance in the South Pacific. He has just published a book entitled "Battle for the Solomons."

JAMES A. WECHSLER is in the Washington bureau of PM.

JOHN DOS PASSOS is the author of "U. S. A." "The Big Money," and "The Ground We Stand On."

REINHOLD NIEBUHR, professor of Applied Christianity at Union Theological Seminary, is the author of "The Nature and Destiny of Man."

HAAKON LIE, secretary of the Executive Board of the Trade Unions of Norway, with headquarters in London, is at present lecturing in the United States.

MARY AGNES HAMILTON, alderman of the London County Council and formerly a Labor member of Parliament, is now in this country on a lecture tour.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL, professor of English at Loyola University, appears frequently in *The Nation* as a critic of art and literature.

GAETANO SALVEMINI, Lauro de Bosis lecturer on the history of Italian civilization at Harvard University, is the author of "Under the Axe of Fascism."

JACQUES BARZUN, assistant professor of history at Columbia University, is to deliver the Lowell lectures in Boston this winter. The title of the series will be "Romanticism and the Modern Ego."

WILLIAM PHILLIPS is an editor of the *Partisan Review*.

GEORGE BARKER is an English poet and critic now living in the United States.

JAMES AGEE contributes a monthly article on films to *The Nation*.

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